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Blackfoot NF6

[For discussion of the issue of incipient social classes among the Blackfoot, see both categories (i.e., 556 and 565).]

585 of going to war, and will start off the same night. If he does so, and is successful, returning with horses or scalps, or both, he at once, on arrival at the camp, proceeds to his father-in-law's lodge and leaves there everything he has brought back, returning to his own lodge on foot, as poor as he left it.

584 We have supposed the proposal in this case to come from the father of the girl, but if a boy desires a particular girl for his wife, the proposal will come from his father; otherwise matters are managed in the same way.

584 This ceremony of moving into the middle of the circle
184 was only performed in the case of important people. The
custom was observed in what might be called a fashionable
●556 wedding among the Blackfeet. Poorer, less important
people married more quietly. If the girl had reached marriageable
age without having been asked for as a wife, she
might tell her mother that she would like to marry a certain
young man, that he was a man she could love and respect.
The mother communicates this to the father of the girl, who
invites the young man to the lodge to a feast, and proposes
the match. The young man returns no answer at the time,
but, going back to his father's lodge, tells him of the offer,
and expresses his feelings about it. If he is inclined to accept,
the relations are summoned, and the matter talked
583 over. A favorable answer being returned, a certain number
585 of horses — what the young man or his father, or both
184 together, can spare — are sent over to the girl's father.
556 They send as many as they can, for the more they send, the
more they are thought of and looked up to. The girl, unless
her parents are very poor, has her outfit, a saddle horse
and pack horse with saddle and pack saddle, parfleches, etc.
If the people are very poor, she may have only a riding
horse. Her relations get together, and do all in their power
to give her a good fitting out, and the father, if he can possibly
do so, is sure to pay them back what they have given.

If he cannot do so, the things are still presented; for, in the 583
case of a marriage, the relations on both sides are anxious to 184
do all that they can to give the young people a good start in 556
life. When all is ready, the girl goes to the lodge where her 585
husband lives, and goes in. If this lodge is too crowded to
receive the couple, the young man will make arrangements [602]
for space in the lodge of a brother, cousin, or uncle, where
there is more room. These are all his close relations, and [591]
he is welcome in any of their lodges, and has rights there.

Sometimes, if two young people are fond of each other, 583
and there is no prospect of their being married, they may 606
take riding horses and a pack horse, and elope at night, going
to some other camp for a while. This makes the girl's
father angry, for he feels that he has been defrauded of his
payments. The young man knows that his father-in-law
bears him a grudge, and if he afterwards goes to war and is
successful, returning with six or seven horses, he will send
them all to the camp where his father-in-law lives, to be
tied in front of his lodge. This at once heals the breach,
and the couple may return. Even if he has not been successful
in war and brought horses, which of course he does
not always accomplish, he from time to time sends the old
man a present, the best he can. Notwithstanding these
efforts at conciliation, the parents feel very bitterly against
him. The girl has been stolen. The union is no marriage
at all. The old people are ashamed and disgraced for their
daughter. Until the father has been pacified by satisfactory
payments, there is no marriage. Moreover, unless the [554]
young man had made a payment, or at least had endeavored
to do so, he would be little thought of among his fellows,
and looked down on as a poor creature without any sense of
honor.

The Blackfeet take as many wives as they wish; but these 595
ceremonies are only carried out in the case of the first 585
wife, the "sits-beside-him" woman. In the case of subse-

595 wives, and does little except to direct the others in their
[554] work, and look after the comfort of her husband. Her place
in the lodge is on his right-hand side, while the others have their places or seats near the door-way. This wife is even allowed at informal gatherings to take a whiff at the pipe, as it is passed around the circle, and to participate in the conversation.

595 In the old days, it was a very poor man who did not
have three wives. Many had six, eight, and some more than
• 556 a dozen. I have heard of one who had sixteen. In those
178 times, provided a man had a good-sized band of horses, the
more wives he had, the richer he was. He could always find young men to hunt for him, if he furnished the mounts, and, of course, the more wives he had, the more robes and furs they would tan for him.

586 If, for any cause, a man wished to divorce himself from a woman, he had but to send her back to her parents and demand the price paid for her, and the matter was accomplished. The woman was then free to marry again, provided her parents were willing.

587 When a man dies, his wives become the potential wives of
428 his oldest brother. Unless, during his life, he has given
them outright horses and other property, at his death they are entitled to none of his possessions. If he has sons, the property is divided among them, except a few horses, which are given to his brothers. If he has no sons, all the property goes to his brothers, and if there are no brothers, it goes to the nearest male relatives on the father's side.

567 The Blackfeet cannot be said to have been slave-holders.
562 It is true that the Crees call the Blackfeet women "Little
Slaves." But this, as elsewhere suggested, may refer to the
593 region whence they originally came, though it is often
explained that it is on account of the manner in which the Blackfeet treat their women, killing them or mutilating their features for adultery and other serious offences.

Although a woman, all her life, was subject to some one's 562
orders, either parent, relative, or husband, a man from his 858
earliest childhood was free and independent. His father
would not punish him for any misconduct, his mother [861]
dared not. At an early age he was taught to ride and
shoot, and horses were given to him. By the time he was
twelve, he had probably been on a war expedition or two.
As a rule in later times, young men married when they were 582
seventeen or eighteen years of age; and often they resided 591
for several years with their fathers, until the family became
so large that there was not room for them all in the lodge.

There were always in the camp a number of boys, 736
orphans, who became the servants of wealthy men for a
consideration; that is, they looked after their patron's horses
and hunted, and in return they were provided with suitable
food and clothing.

Among the Blackfeet, all men were free and equal, and 614
office was not hereditary. Formerly each gens was governed 622
by a chief, who was entitled to his office by virtue of his [641]
bravery and generosity. The head chief was chosen by the
chiefs of the gentes from their own number, and was usually
the one who could show the best record in war, as proved at
the Medicine Lodge,[1] at which time he was elected; and
for the ensuing year he was invested with the supreme
power. But no matter how brave a man might have been, [157]
or how successful in war, he could not hope to be the chief [577]
either of a gens or of the tribe, unless he was kind-hearted,
and willing to share his prosperity with the poor. For this [556]
reason, a chief was never a wealthy man, for what he acquired
with one hand he gave away with the other. It was he
who decided when the people should move camp, and
where they should go. But in this, as in all other important
affairs, he generally asked the advice of the minor chiefs.

The ***I-kun-uh'-kah-tsi*** (All Comrades) were directly under 000

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[1] See chapter on Religion.

and the Indians began to realize what a change the posses- 721
sion of these animals was working in their mode of life, when 177
they saw that, by enormously increasing the transporting 231
power of each family, horses made far greater possessions 181
practicable, that they insured the food supply, rendered the moving of the camp easier and more rapid, made possible long journeys with a minimum of effort, and that they had a value for trading, the Blackfoot mind received a new idea,
the idea that it was desirable to accumulate property. The [556]
Blackfoot saw that, since horses could be exchanged for everything that was worth having, no one had as many horses as he needed. A pretty wife, a handsome war bonnet, a strong bow, a finely ornamented woman's dress, — any or all of these things a man might obtain, if he had horses to trade for them. The gambler at "hands," or at the ring game, could bet horses. The man who was devoted to his last married wife could give her a horse as an evidence of his affection.

We can readily understand what a change the advent of the horse must have worked in the minds of a people like the Blackfeet, and how this changed mental attitude would react on the Blackfoot way of living. At first, there were but few horses among them, but they knew that their neighbors to the west and south — across the mountains and on the great plains beyond the Missouri and the Yellowstone — had plenty of them; that the Kūtenais, the Kalispels, the Snakes, the Crows, and the Sioux were well provided. They soon learned that horses were easily driven off, and that, even if followed by those whose property they had taken, the pursued had a great advantage over the pursuers; and we may feel sure that it was not long before the idea of capturing horses from the enemy entered some Blackfoot head and was put into practice.

Now began a systematic sending forth of war parties against 721
neighboring tribes for the purpose of capturing horses, which [178]

423 were open equally to all according to one's energy and ability. Tribes, bands, and
even families might have their favorite and usual area within which to hunt, but
these ties to a territory were unrelated to ideas of ownership of land, game or
425 plants. Once labor had been expended, however—an animal killed, a horse stolen,
a plant gathered, a stick or stone picked up, or a dream dreamed—the product
was imbued with value and became personal property.

422 It is possible to separate food from other types of property because it was
not owned by individuals in the same way as were other goods. Food "belonged"
to the collector but was put in charge of the women of the collector's own or
adopted family upon return to camp. Food then belonged to the family, yet
224 even this title was clouded by a series of social obligations. A hunter was obliged
571 to share with anyone who had helped him in the kill, with the man whose horse
he had borrowed, or with the man from whom he had obtained hunting power. He
was expected to provide some part of the meat for the sick or disabled, and he also
might have had obligations to some of his in-laws. The family used what remained.
[261] In times of famine these rules were set aside and food became band property to
be shared by all. Food had additional uses, both ceremonial and social—feasts were
574 an important part of many rituals, to be described later, and as part of the everyday
social life of the men, as noted above.

422 Horses and other goods were individually owned by men, women or children.
Personal dreams, experiences, exploits, and the symbols of these were also
422 personal property and all could be transferred—sold, exchanged, given, or loaned,
in whole or in part—by one person to another. These other goods appear to have
424 been free of forced sharing in times of scarcity. The rule appears to have been that
785 none should starve, but other needs of the poor had to be met by appeals to the
generosity of those who had more. The unfortunate were cared for but usually
given worn or castoff clothing, tepee covers, tools, robes, and so on, rarely things
of much value.

437 Goods other than food were used by their owners or were used as exchange
goods. Exchange might be for economic reasons, as when a man gave a horse to a
medicine man for a cure, or to get a charm to insure success in horse stealing, war,
or other endeavor. Goods might be given in exchange for the supernatural power
of another. One kind of property could be used to purchase another, for example,
782 furs and guns for horses, or horses for tepee covers. Another type of transfer was
for ritual reasons, as when goods were offered to the sun in the Sun Dance, to
764 ghosts or other spirit forces in propitiation, petition, or thanksgiving. Here too
could be classified the practice of placing some of the property of a deceased with
his body in order that he might have the use of such things in the next world.

525 A third use, more difficult to classify, would be the exchange of property
in gambling. The Blackfeet were avid gamblers and some on occasion were known
to have gambled away all their possessions.

431 The fourth use of property was its transfer, by gift or exchange, in order
to gain increased prestige and status. Among the Blackfeet property was accumulated
● 556 and wealth created, to be used for the demonstration of generosity. A man
secured horses and other goods in order to give them away. He loaned a horse to
another hunter, in part to share in the meat, in part to create an obligation for

a repayment, but this act was also a display of generosity toward one of less wealth 431 and thus established a moral obligation that could be converted later into support for one's opinions in council. A man of property gained position within his band 556 by sharing generously with those less fortunate than himself, and gained stature within the tribe by feasting members of other bands and the giving of gifts to the leaders of other bands. *Generosity was a major requisite for prestige and status.*

In summary, resources were unowned, food and materials were open equally 421 to all according to his energy and ability. Food became the property of the one who took it, to be shared first with his family, then with others to whom he might be obligated and with the unfortunate. In times of famine, food became band property to be shared by all.

Horses and other material goods were individually owned and were bought and sold, borrowed and given. Personal dreams, experiences, exploits and the symbols of these were also personal property and could be transferred by one person to another in exchange for other goods.

The distribution system fostered individual gain and accumulation. The 556 consumption system countered this by imposing social sanctions that rewarded charity and generosity with prestige and status. This force will be examined further.

Social Organization

A child born to Blackfeet parents began early to learn the patterns of social 592 interaction. He was first of all a member of a household—the occupants of a single tepee—which included the parents, unmarried brothers and sisters, and perhaps one or two other relatives as well, such as a grandparent, a maiden aunt, or other wives of the household head.

As the child grew older it learned that its family was the minimal economic unit of the Blackfeet society. The father was the decision maker, the one responsible for the protection and good behavior of its members; the first wife was the owner of the tepee, responsible for the other wives if any, for the care of the children, maintenance of the tepee and other duties within the women's realm. The child 611 learned too about other kinsmen, that he had important relatives on both sides of the family—in other words, kin were recognized bilaterally.

As acquaintances were made beyond the household, he or she learned that 621 there were other families that regularly lived near and traveled with one's own. These were members of the band, the day in and day out hunting and gathering group that was the basic economic and political unit of the Blackfeet. It was the band that moved according to the requirements of the yearly round, camped alone through the winter, joined with other bands in the summer for the tribal hunt. The child learned the band name and identified with it: he was a child of his parents and one of the Small Robes, Skunks, Lone Eaters or whatever his band might be (see Grinnell 1907:208–210 for one listing of band names). Over the years he 186 learned too that the people who gathered during the summer hunt were fellow Piegan, and that among other people encountered on occasion were some who spoke his language, did things his way, were Blackfeet of the other divisions—the

point here is that these powers and their symbols were subject to the same controls 778
as any other property. A man, therefore, incurred both rights and obligations with
the attainment of power. He was expected to be generous with it, but at the same 421
time he expected to be paid in goods or prestige for the help he gave.

The Blackfeet believed that the possession of a guardian spirit and power 778
were important for success, so such powers and the bundles that represented them
were highly valued. Not all men were successful in their vision quest, but this was 554
not held against them. They were just unlucky. Neither they nor anyone else
expected much of them, however, and they could hardly advance in prestige without
some successes. Such men might be motivated to gain property to enable them to
purchase power from someone who had had the experience, and men with power
often sought to transfer it because it was a restricted and often burdensome property.
As with other kinds of property, the bundle owner was expected to be 778
generous with his power. Bundles had to be opened periodically, and the owner had
to provide a feast for invited guests as a part of the ritual. In addition, the bundle 574
owner had to observe a number of taboos associated with each bundle—it had to 784
be displayed properly, no one should walk between the bundle and its owner, and
numerous restrictions were put on the owner's behavior. Some men owned several
bundles, but whether one or many, some owners found the responsibilities, expenses
and taboos too burdensome and sought buyers for their power.

Values and Status

Perhaps, as already indicated, one of the most persistent themes of Blackfeet 554
life was the high value put on individual prestige, a value that operated
through and maintained a status structure. This was not a true class society with 183
easily recognized social divisions, but a structure of status positions, each shading
into a higher one. The high status people were distinguished readily from those
of low status, but the separations along the line might be imperceptible.[8] The
whole system was an expression of Blackfeet values, and the highest status was
achieved by the man who best represented these ideals.

The major characteristics valued by the Blackfeet and by which men were
judged appear to have been bravery, generosity, wisdom, and skill; these were displayed 555
in warfare, horse raiding, hunting, religious knowledge and the acquisition 556
of property for use in the service of others.

It is difficult to establish a hierarchy of the importance of these different
attributes. Bravery and generosity appear to have been essential. The ethnographers 555
differ in their ordering of exploits by which a reputation for bravery was established, 183
but all agree that war honors were ranked, and that the killing and scalping
of an enemy ranked below the more dangerous feats of successfully wresting the
weapons from an enemy and escaping without injury, or stealing into the center

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[8] Ewers believes that social classes were forming in the late 1880s under the influence
of horse ownership. A small rich class, a numerous middle class, and a number of poor 565
were recognized, grounded in respect for individual rights and property rights (Ewers
1955:240–244).

555 183 of an enemy encampment and making off with a fine horse that had been tethered to its owner's tepee. Bravery was measured, then, according to the relative danger of the exploit and the most dangerous deeds were those related to war and raiding. 554 183 But brave deeds alone were not enough. Unless a man were generous with his goods and helpful to his neighbors, he would be branded as selfish and stingy and his supporters might abandon him. This emphasis put stress on acquiring property with which to be generous which in turn made skill important. But all these traits were enhanced if a man had supernatural support. Power increased a man's self-confidence and the expectancy of success on the part of himself and others. Ewers remarked that the horse raider ". . . was a courageous, alert, resourceful fighting man. Nevertheless, he did not attribute his success in war to these qualities. Rather he attributed it to the power of his war medicine" (Ewers 1958:127).

A man of ability, achievement, and with supernatural support was able to attract followers in his ventures of war and raiding, or in his political maneuvers. Influence began to build as he used these qualities and property to rally members of his family and band. He drew first upon the ties of kinship and then attracted followers from other groups to gain leadership within the band. The maintenance of this position, and the advance to higher status depended upon his ability to exercise all of his personal attributes in correct ways.

183 626 183 The ideals were a standard, of course, and probably few attained the ideal. But those who did stood as examples to the children, as noted earlier. People measured each other and themselves by the ideals, and in a society where gossip was an important control over behavior, verbal praise was eagerly sought. What people said about you was important, and the amount of praise a person received could be increased if he spoke well of himself. This seemed to be a response among the Blackfeet. People talked about their good deeds as well as the good and bad deeds of others, and were much concerned about their own good name. Men who aspired to leadership tested each other's claims; while rising on their own claims they could climb faster, in a relative sense, if by gossip they could cut down the man above them.

554 556 In a sense then, property was the measure of a man's achievement, and the use of property became the means of validating a particular status and rising to a higher one. Property was accumulated to use in the gaining of further goods and, above all, as a means of expressing generosity. Highest status went to the generous man; a stingy man was the butt of gossip, and lost status among the Blackfeet.

Claims of power, bravery, skill and generosity were subject to public judgment. 796 554 Opportunities were given, particularly at the Sun Dance, for the recital of coup claims, and public acceptance of these served to validate them. Men called upon to fill the roles in the Sun Dance ritual, society initiations, and naming ceremonies were selected from among those of accomplishment, and before performing the required act the man recounted the achievements that qualified him for the honor being bestowed upon him. Similarly, the woman who sponsored the Sun Dance, and the women who cut the buffalo tongues as a part of the ritual, publicly proclaimed their virtue. In ordinary conversation and in the give and take of daily life people might boast and overelaborate their exploits, but in these formal situa-

554 177 has gained them this status, however, cannot be translated into effective, practical political and economic leadership, so that another type of Indian-oriented leader must fill this gap.

Interpreters,[16] like Raymond Black Plume, form a high status class made up of relatively younger men who are better educated, were raised in Indian-oriented homes, speak both languages fluently, and have assumed, or gained, leadership roles in the community. They express the ambition to "make a life by combining what is best of the Indian way with the best of the white way." They are capable of fitting into a role made necessary by the reservation complex wherein two contrasting societies attempt to function under a common political system. They can talk to and better understand both sides. At the same time, these leaders *are Indian-oriented.* They want to be accepted by the Indian society and want to maintain Indian identity, but both the bicultural milieu and their personal qualities lead to an understanding and participation that differs from that of the chiefs.

The interpreters know much of the old religion and lore. Quite often their fathers had been of the chief class and these men had been taught some of the
554 traditions in their homes. But they are not committed, openly at least, to the old religion. They are members, and often leaders, of Christian churches. Those who
177 are Catholics look for elements in Catholicism that support Indian values and they
771 are adept at finding Christian analogues for Blackfeet beliefs. Others have joined minor Protestant churches and stress that the predominant Indian attendance at these makes them Indian churches. There is some evidence that many Indian-oriented persons are changing church affiliation frequently and that this is caused possibly by a search for a white church that is most congruent with the Blackfeet religion.[17]

[796] The interpreters participate in Indian ceremonies and are given parts to play in the Sun Dance. They do not have the traditional wisdom required for the roles, but they are Indian leaders who are sympathetic and "good." They tend to express Indian values, and subscribe to Indian symbols. Interpreters frequently put up a tepee for Indian Days, wear a chiefly costume on appropriate occasions, stress their Indian names, and belong to a men's society.

554 177 In addition to their Indian training, these men have had the opportunity to get a good education in American schools, to travel and otherwise become experienced with much of white culture. They are capable of competing with the white-oriented, and through ability, hard work, and some economic success are well accepted by the white-oriented community. They could succeed on their own
554 in any rural off-reservation community. The interpreters are not wealthy. They
•556 usually earn good salaries in agency or council positions but they use this income to help support a family ranch. Their less acculturated kinsmen work the ranch
[602] in return for some financial support. All share in the profits and losses from the enterprise.

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[16] In an earlier paper I included the interpreters among what I called the 150% Men—people who knew two cultures well (McFee 1968).

[794] [17] The Blackfeet have not accepted the peyote cults common to so many Indian reservations even though these are active in reservations in the surrounding region.

Because of their Indian-orientation, however, they must curb their economic 554
ambitions in order to maintain their status. The very capabilities that make
them valuable leaders within their group subject them to constant surveillance and 556
criticism. In addition, their youth is held against them. In the past, status through 554
wisdom came with age and in the eyes of many of their people they are wise
too soon. So these men cannot acquire too much; they must be generous and [561]
helpful, and build a following that will attest to their wisdom, skill, and generosity
in future years.

It is possible that in later life these men might take over the positions of custodians of tradition as these become vacated by the present chiefs, but this is doubtful, even though some people occasionally refer to them as "young chiefs." The tentative prediction would be that high status positions of both types will be filled from below where the factors of relative education and experience tend to produce differential experience within the Indian-oriented society. People of lower status already give indications as to how these positions will be filled.

The interpreters also differ from the chiefs, and many other Indian-oriented 554
people as well, in the furnishing and maintenance of their homes. Most of the
chiefs live in small frame or log houses with minimal services and simple furniture. 362
They rarely have appliances—a wood range serves for both cooking and [342]
heating. The structures are unpainted inside and out and no attempt has been made
to fence or otherwise mark the house lot or "territory." The interpreters, on the [354]
other hand, seem to have accepted more of the white-oriented interest in things. [353]
As a class, they live in larger three- or five-room houses which are painted on the [351]
inside at least. They build closets, have more furniture, own refrigerators, radios, [177]
and television sets. Often there is a fenced area around the house or some other
border defining feature. The interpreters' homes look like those of many middle [342]
status white-oriented families—larger and better furnished than that of Bob Sorrel [352]
Horse, but not as freshly painted and filled with things as was Ray Hawkins' home. [351]
Here again is a sign that the interpreters aim for the best of two worlds.

Indian-Oriented Low Status Low status Indian-oriented people can 554
be described by characteristics quite similar to those of the same status in white-
oriented society. These people are poor. Some are hard workers and others improvi- 735
dent, but lack of training limits these men to irregular wage labor. They do not [464]
find regular seasonal jobs but must take work where and when they can find it.
Several of the improvident ones, like their white-oriented counterparts, are called
"bums" and "winos" and are problem cases for the authorities. But there is a 554
difference between men of the differing orientations even at the lowest status
level. They face in different cultural directions, and the analysis of the data from 735
my sample showed that the Indian-oriented low status man is more a part of his 177
society than the lower-class white man is in his.

In contrast with the white-oriented group, economic factors fail to separate the low from many of the middle status people in Indian-oriented society. Irregular work, low income, poorly maintained and crowded houses are characteristics shared by people variously ranked on the status scale. The ultimate criterion 554
for status assignment is social participation. 571

Low status people do not take part in as many social activities as do the

[ca. 1850]

cover and its accessories; two horses to drag the lodge poles; two for packing meat, other food, and equipment; three horses to carry the women (at least two of which would drag travois); and two riding horses for the men. Each of the men would also need a buffalo horse. A young married couple with a baby or no children needed no more than five horses. However, a large family of more than five adults required fifteen to twenty or more horses.[3] 492

Nevertheless, there were many poor families among the Blackfeet who owned only one or two horses. Their poverty in horses caused their standard of living to be well below that of the average family in their tribe at the time. Their possessions more nearly resembled those of the pre-horse Indians in quantity. Their lodges were small, covered with no more than six or seven buffalo hides, with short, light foundation poles. Their clothing, household utensils, and weapons were few and poor in quality. They owned no fancy dress clothes, no handsome riding gear. Their guns, if they owned any, were worn, broken, and repaired with rawhide cord. They had few if any buffalo robes to offer the traders. 511

At the other end of the Blackfoot economic and social ladder were the relatively few wealthy families—the owners of large horse herds. The fur trader, Charles Larpenteur, writing in 1860, aptly characterized the rich Indian: [556]

> It is a fine sight to see one of these big men among the Blackfeet, who has two or three lodges, five or six wives, twenty or thirty children, and fifty to a hundred horses; for his trade amounts to upward of $2,000 a year.[4]

The man of wealth and the members of his family dressed well. They owned several changes of clothing, including elaborately decorated garments to wear in dress parades, ceremonies, and feasts in honor of important visitors and on their own visits to

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[3] Ewers, "Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture," B.A.E. *Bull.* 159, 129–39.

[4] *Forty Years a Fur Trader*, II, 401.

511 other Indian camps or to the trading posts. They obtained the most attractive ornaments and best weapons from the traders' stock. They owned important and costly medicine bundles and showy and well-made riding gear. Their tipis were both large and handsomely furnished. As Larpenteur stated, some of them owned more than one tipi.

● 556 Wealth brought both opportunity and responsibility to the man who possessed it. The stingy rich man was despised by his less fortunate fellows. The generous man of wealth was beloved
556 by them. If he was liberal in feasting and in giving away food
622 and horses to the needy, if he lent horses to the poor for their use in hunting and moving camp, his fellow band members would want him for their chief—provided he also possessed a fine war record. James Doty described the Blackfoot chieftaincy thus in 1854:

> Every man who can acquire a large herd of horses, keep a good Lodge and make a large trade in Buffalo Robes is a chief, and he will maintain a persuasive influence over his people just so long as he continues wealthy, and ministers to the popular voice in directing the movements of the camp, leading war parties etc. Whenever he opposes his wishes to those of his band, it will desert him and turn to some chief more pliable.[5]

621
178 The hunting band, which was still the basic political unit among the Blackfeet, was probably a much more fluid unit than it had been in prehistoric times. In early times, when everyone stood literally and figuratively on an equal footing, the chiefs had no property to dispense. But in the middle of the nineteenth century poor families looked to their chief for charity. They changed their band allegiance if they believed they might better their economic condition as followers of a more liberal chief. Some of the larger bands had more than one chief. New bands were created when a rising leader and his followers broke away from an existing band. An older band might dissolve after the

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[5] Doty to Isaac I. Stevens, December 20, 1854. Indian Office Records.

[ca. 1850]

to Bear Chief when she was no more than seven. She married 584
him when she was about seventeen. Some girls married before
the age of twelve, but many reached their middle teens before 582
they took this serious step. Few young men married before the
age of twenty-one.

It was considered a family disgrace for an unmarried girl to 848
become pregnant. The girl alone was held responsible for her
actions. It was something of a disgrace to the families of both 583
boy and girl if they eloped. The socially approved marriage was
an important family function. It was arranged by a close friend 584
or a relative of the boy with the girl's father or elder brother.
Marriage was simply solemnized by an exchange of gifts between 585
the families of the bride and groom. The first gifts could be of-
fered by either the bride's or the groom's folks. Horses always 431
were the most prized gift. One or more horses were invariably
given, along with robes or blankets and household goods of lesser
value. Relatives commonly chipped in to make the marriage gifts
as imposing as possible. It was expected that the gifts returned
by the spouse's family should be more lavish than those they had
received. The bride went to live with her husband in a separate
lodge or that of his family.

My elderly informants were very careful to remind me that [583]
white men who claimed the Blackfeet used to purchase their
wives were misinformed. They stressed the importance of the
exchange of gifts in the old-time Blackfoot marriage ceremony.

After marriage it was improper for the husband to speak di- 602
rectly to his mother-in-law. But his ties with the male members
of his wife's family generally became very strong. He commonly [606]
gave horses to his elder brother-in-law after his return from a [607]
successful horse raid. He sometimes gave him choice buffalo
meat after a hunt.

Polygamy was common among the Blackfeet because it was a 595
practical means of caring for the excess of women created by
heavy war losses. Women outnumbered men by two or three to [182]
one. Possession of several wives was one of the distinguishing [556]
marks of the successful man. A few of the leading chiefs had ten

[ca. 1850]

721 bands of Crees, the Crows, Shoshonis, Flatheads, Pend d'Oreilles,
and Kutenais all looked upon them as their greatest enemies.

Nevertheless, Blackfoot warfare was aimed at neither the sys-
tematic extermination of enemy tribes nor the acquisition of
their territory. It was not organized and directed by a central
military authority, nor was it prosecuted by large, disciplined
701 armies. Rather, Blackfoot warfare was carried on primarily by
numerous small parties of volunteers who banded together to
capture horses from enemy tribes. Each raiding party was hastily
organized before departure and disbanded immediately after its
[559] return home. It might never see action again as a military unit.
Its members were motivated much less by tribal patriotism than
by hope of personal gain—the economic security and social pres-
tige that possession of a goodly number of horses would bring
721 them. The killing of enemy tribesmen and the taking of scalps
were not major objectives of these raids.

701 Many of the most active Blackfoot horse raiders were mem-
bers of poor families who were ambitious to better their lot.
729 They were inclined to take the most desperate chances. Some
acquired horses, settled down, and became respected members
of the middle class. A few became wealthy. Many lost their lives
701 in actions with the enemy. Most sons of middle-class families
needed more horses than their fathers could give them if they
were to marry and set up their own households. A few cowardly
fellows and some sons of wealthy men never went on horse raids.
But there were also rich young men who loved the excitement
of these raids and coveted the prestige that could be gained
through success in war.

702 The raiding party itself offered the best training ground for
the would-be warrior. Boys in their middle teens joined these
parties to learn the arts of war. More than a century ago Doty
observed:

> In one of these parties are generally found 3 or 4 young men, or mere boys, who are apprentices. They go without the expectation of receiving a horse, carry extra moccasins and tobacco for

and about 70 acres on Cut Bank Creek, and planted oats, po- 241
tatoes, and barley.[15] The old Indian pattern of residence in bands
began to give way to the rural white man's practice of individual 361
family residence. The Indian families built their homes along 177
the streams near water and timber.

A delegation of Piegan leaders traveled to Washington and 657
asked the Great White Father to spend a goodly portion of their
new annuities for cattle and large horses. In 1890 some one thou- 233
sand heifers and twenty-five bulls were issued, and the Piegans
got their start as cattlemen. Many of them who had shown no
interest in farming found herding cattle enjoyable work. It wasn't
unlike caring for horses. More cattle were distributed in subse-
quent years. By 1896 there were more than five hundred different
brands on the reservation stock book. The Great Northern Rail- 497
way, which was built across the center of the reservation in the
early nineties, offered a ready outlet to market for the Indians'
cattle. In 1895 they shipped $30,000 worth of prime beef steers
to Chicago. By 1898 the Indians were operating two hundred 233
mowing machines to cut wild hay for winter cattle feed.[16] 407

During the late eighties and early nineties large stallions were
given owners of Indian ponies to breed with their small mares 231
in order to obtain stronger farm animals capable of pulling a plow
or a wagon. The fullbloods could not forget that their people
used to measure a man's wealth in horses. They counted their
colts sired by big Morgan stallions as they were born to their
Indian pony mares. The little Indian pony was disappearing,
but the Indians' horse herds were increasing rapidly. Some men 231
specialized in horses of particular colors and bragged of their 556 ●
hundreds of whites, browns, or pintos. Owl Child, one of the
most successful Piegan stockmen of this period, was very proud
of his large horse herd. He owned nearly five hundred head of
cattle, worth much more than his horses, but he never men-
tioned them in his bragging.

Five hundred wagons were issued to the Piegans in the early 493

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[15] *Ibid.*, 1888, 151.
[16] *Ibid.*, 1896, 176–77.

WEALTH IN HORSES

171 Contemporary observers of the Plains Indians in buffalo days noted
that these people reckoned their wealth in horses. Some tribes appeared
556 to be rich in horses. Others were obviously poor. Within
231 each tribe there were individuals who were relatively wealthy in
horses. Others were desperately poor. The individual's status as an
owner of horses conditioned his use of these animals and helped to
determine both the nature and degree of his participation in many
128 aspects of the life of the people of his tribe. Before proceeding with
detailed consideration of the functions of horses in Blackfoot culture,
it is desirable to determine as precisely as possible not only the
tribal horse holdings but also the range of individual wealth in horses
among the Blackfoot, and to compare Blackfoot wealth in horses with
that of other horse-using tribes of the Great Plains and Plateau in
order to indicate their relative standing as horse-owning people.

BLACKFOOT TRIBAL WEALTH IN HORSES

175 I have found no statistics on the total number of horses owned by
the Blackfoot tribes prior to 1830. Three quarters of a century ago,
231 Lt. James Bradley, who obtained much of his information on the
Blackfoot from the trader, Alexander Culbertson, and other white
men who had known these Indians since the 1830's, stated that "the
Blackfeet had possessed horses as far back as their traditions extended
but never in considerable numbers in early times, and even as late
as 1833 they were poorly mounted." He estimated that "about the
year 1830" the Piegan owned an average of 10 horses per lodge, while
the Blood and North Blackfoot averaged but 5 horses per lodge
(Bradley, 1923, pp. 256, 288).

In 1856 Blackfoot Agent Hatch estimated that the Piegan and Blood owned at least 10 horses per lodge, but the North Blackfoot had fewer horses owing to frequent raids on their herds by Cree and Assiniboin (U. S. Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1856, p. 627). Four years later, Agent Vaughan made a more detailed estimate of Blackfoot horse ownership. The ratios in the last two columns of table 1 are compiled on the basis of Vaughan's figures in the first three columns (U. S. Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1860, p. 308).

specially trained war, hunting, and race horses were the property of 231
men, women generally owned the animals they used for riding and 422
transport duty. Women received gifts of horses, inherited them from
relatives, or obtained them in barter. These horses belonged to them, [425]
and they were free to give them away, trade them, or loan them as
they saw fit. Children also owned riding horses or colts which were
not disposed of without their consent.

As early as 1809, a few individuals owned large herds of horses. 231
Alexander Henry reported that "some of the Blackfeet own 40 or 50 horses. But the Piegans have by far the greatest numbers; I heard of one man who had 300" (Henry and Thompson, 1897, p. 526). However, Maximilian's reference (1833) to a chief who owned between 4,000 and 5,000 horses appears to have been exaggerated. (See Ewers, 1943.) Indian Agent Hatch told of the visit of a Blood chief, "Chief Bird," who owned 100 horses, to Fort Benton in the fall of 1856 (Hatch MS.). Bradley described the Blood head chief, "Seen From Afar," who died in 1870, aged about 60: "He was the greatest chief Major Culbertson ever saw amongst the Blackfeet—having 10 wives and 100 horses" (Bradley, 1900, p. 258). Culbertson's appraisal of this man may have been influenced by the fact that Seen From Afar (or Far Seeing) was his brother-in-law. Nevertheless, some of my Blood informants remembered this head chief of their tribe as the wealthiest Blood Indian of his period.

The trader Charles Larpenteur, wrote of the period 1860: "It
is a fine sight to see one of those big men among the Blackfeet, who
has two or three lodges, five or six wives, twenty or thirty children,
and fifty to a hundred horses; for his trade amounts to upward of
$2,000 a year" (Larpenteur, 1898, vol. 2, p. 401). Obviously that
trader was describing an important headman or chief. Schultz (1907, [556] ●
p. 152) told of the Piegan in the late 1870's: "Horses were the tribal
wealth, and one who owned a large herd of them held a position only
to be compared to that of our multi-millionaires. There were individuals who owned from one hundred to three and four hundred."

My informants agreed that the wealthiest Blackfoot Indian in buffalo days was Many Horses (Heavy Shield, Middle Sitter), principal chief of the Piegan for a short time before his death in 1866. Although my eldest informants were mere children when Many Horses died, several of them were related to him, and all had heard of him through their parents and other older Indians. Their estimates of the number of his horses ranged from "about 500" to "less than 1,000." I believe the lower figure is the more accurate one. Three Calf claimed Many Horses tried to prevent other Indians from counting his horses. If he saw someone trying to count them he brought out his medicine bag filled with deer hoofs and rattled the

231 hoofs, causing his horses to mill around so as to make further enumeration impossible. Yet Many Horses is credited with knowing every animal in his herd. He is said to have employed 10 or more boys to care for them. When camp was moved those of his horses that were not loaned to less fortunate individuals to transport their belongings were driven in three to five large herds.

Bull Shoe (Lone Man) was the wealthiest Piegan after the death of Many Horses. He may have owned nearly 500 horses in late buffalo days. Stingy, a blind Piegan, who died in 1918, aged about 78 years, then owned between 200 and 300 horses. Many-White-Horses (ca. 1834–1905) also owned more than 100 horses at that time. [556] Informants claimed that a man who possessed 40 or 50 horses in buffalo days was considered wealthy by his fellow tribesmen.[7] It is probable that less than a score of Piegan were entitled to that distinction at any period during buffalo days.

Certainly less than 5 percent of Piegan men were wealthy in horses 511 in buffalo days. Probably the proportion of rich men to the total 231 adult male populations was smaller among the Blood and North Blackfoot. The majority of the Blackfoot had a difficult time meeting the needs of their nomadic existence with a limited number of horses. A fairly large proportion of Blackfoot families, possibly as many as 25 percent, owned less than a half dozen horses in buffalo days.[8]

231 The traditional belief that wealth should be reckoned in horses was 556 difficult for these Indians to forget even after horses became so plentiful in the Northwest that they could be purchased for from $2 to $5 a head (Denny, 1939, pp. 259–260). Frank Sherburne recalled with amusement that some 50 years ago, Owl Child, a Piegan who owned about 500 head of fine cattle and a great many horses, liked to brag about the size of his horse herd. His cattle had many times the monetary value of his horses, but he never mentioned them in his boasting. During the period of my residence on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana (1941–44) there were still several older fullbloods who owned sizable horse herds. Although most of these animals were unbroken and unused, their owners had no desire to sell them. Possession of horses made those Indians feel both wealthy and important.

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[7] Piegan remembered as wealthy horse owners in buffalo days were Water-Bull-Mountain-Chief, Big Nose (also known as Three Suns, who died in 1896, a prominent chief), Crow Feathers, Big Plume (born ca. 1826), Wolf Calf (noted leader of the horse medicine cult, born before 1800), Wolf-Comes-Over-the-Hill, Many Strikes, Wolf Tail (born ca. 1853), Middle Calf, Owl Child (born ca. 1855), Horn, Tearing Lodge (born ca. 1834), and Curlew Woman (born ca. 1823). The last named was a woman.

[178] [8] It is important to qualify these statements with the phrase "in buffalo days," because horses became much more plentiful among the Blackfoot tribes after they settled down on reservations following the extermination of the buffalo. Not only did Stingy, Bull Shoe, Many-White-Horses, Owl Child, and other former owners of many horses greatly increase the sizes of their herds, but a number of other Indians, who had previously owned smaller herds, became rich in horses. By 1900 there were several Piegan owners of 500 to 1,000 or more horses on the Montana Reservation.

492 monness in buffalo days. In former times those objects[A] were indices
of their owner's wealth and status.

531 Bodmer illustrated a fancy crupper on a Blackfoot man's horse
[541] in 1833 (Maximilian, 1906, Atlas, pl. 19). However, the earliest pic-
[178] torial representation of the elaborately decorated martingale and crup-
per combination I have seen appears in Sohon's 1855 field sketch, "The
[556] Bloods Come in Council" (pl. 4).[B] In size and shape the pieces portrayed by Bodmer and Sohon resemble specimens collected in more recent years. Bradley (1870's) stated that the Blackfoot woman's ornamental crupper had a fringe of horsehair to the lower ends of which little bells were attached. In my informants' youth cut buckskin fringes were also used. The ornamental crupper had a soft skin or trade flannel base. It was decorated with beadwork or (if of skin) in angular painted designs "something like a parfleche design." In more recent times (since ca. 1875) floral designs, combined with the double-curve have been employed commonly. Martingales were similarly ornamented (Wissler, 1915, fig. 15; Ewers, 1945 b, figs. 61-63).

Much more common in buffalo days were martingales and cruppers
492 of narrow bands of rawhide, used on the riding horses of both sexes and on pack animals. The martingale was a rawhide band about 3 fingers wide, tied to the prongs of the pommel of the wood saddle by rawhide cords. The crupper was a single or double strip about the same width throughout most of its length, extended by means of a grass-padded loop, strengthened with soft skin binding, under the horse's tail. It was tied to the front or rear horn prongs of the frame
[531] saddle with buckskin cord (fig. 16). Some women painted the sur-

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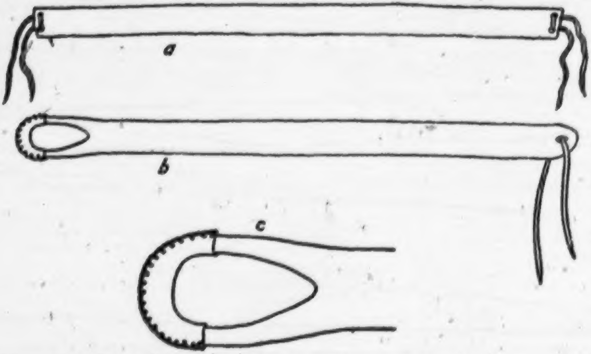

FIGURE 16.—a, Simple rawhide martingale; b, simple rawhide crupper; c, detail of crupper tail pad, Blackfoot.

[A] [i.e., elaborately decorated martingales and cruppers --Analyst]

[B] [See category 492, p. 358-C--Analyst]

In the summer of 1942,
I saw an elderly Piegan tie two feathers in the tail of the horse of a middle-aged man which was to be ridden in the Fourth of July parade at Browning. (This ornament is now in the Denver Art Museum, Cat. No. FB1-95-G.) The old man then said a short prayer that the horse might not fall or throw its rider. This also is said to have been an old Blackfoot custom.[89] 492 [541] [782]

DECORATION OF WOMEN'S HORSES

A wealthy Blackfoot took pride in providing his favorite wife with fancy trappings for her riding horse, to be employed when visiting neighboring camps or other friendly tribes, and when moving to the Sun Dance encampment. These trappings, including decorated bridles, martingales, cruppers, saddlebags, and the finest painted rawhide containers obtainable, were thought to enhance the woman's appearance on horseback. 492 556 [531]

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[89] Lewis and Clark (1805) noted Lemhi Shoshoni practice of decorating the manes and tails of their horses with feathers (Coues, 1893, vol. 2, p. 563.) The Crow claimed they tied up their horses' tails to make them run faster (Marquis, 1928, p. 114). Omaha young men occasionally "decked the manes and tails of their horses with bright ribbons or bands painted in gay colors" (Fletcher and La Flesche, 1911, p. 358). [171]

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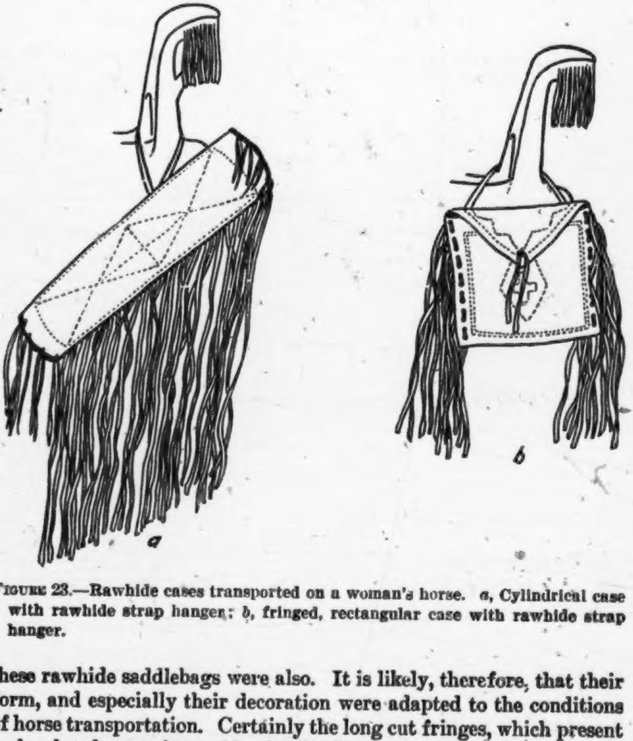

FIGURE 23.—Rawhide cases transported on a woman's horse. *a*, Cylindrical case with rawhide strap hanger; *b*, fringed, rectangular case with rawhide strap hanger.

415 these rawhide saddlebags were also. It is likely, therefore, that their
492 form, and especially their decoration were adapted to the conditions
of horse transportation. Certainly the long cut fringes, which present
such a handsome picture blowing in the wind or trailing by the side
of the riding horse would have been an impractical nuisance if placed
[556] on a dog or carried on the low-slung dog travois. Even in the late
years of their nomadic existence it was the wealthly families among
the Blackfoot who owned the most elaborately decorated luggage.
The saddlebags and rawhide cases carried on the riding horses of
favorite wives were thought to dress up the horse and make the
women look well on horseback.

household engaged in the task. Each family was responsible for its 484 own belongings. Every article had its assigned place and means of transportation. [593] [595]

PACKING THE LODGE

The lodge was the bulkiest, heaviest, and most complex possession transported by the Blackfoot in moving camp. A century ago Denig 492 (1930, p. 578) wrote that among the Upper Missouri tribes the size of the lodge was determined "by the number of persons to be accommodated or their means of transporting it." 342 Two decades later Bradley (1923, p. 258) stated that Blackfoot lodge size varied according 342 to the size "desired or the wealth of the occupants." Informants 556 claimed the latter factor was of primary importance, for the larger the lodge the greater were the number of skins required for construction of its cover and the number, length, and basal thickness of the lodge poles necessary for its foundation. Consequently the larger the lodge, 492 the greater the number of horses required to transport it.

Before the skin cover was replaced by the canvas one during the period 1870–85, Blackfoot lodges were sized according to the number 342 of buffalo cowskins employed in the construction of the cover. The smallest lodge had 6 skins, the largest about 40 skins. Alexander Culbertson (in 1848) saw a lodge of 40 skins owned by the Blood chief, Seen-from-Afar, a wealthy owner of 100 horses and husband of 10 wives (Bradley, 1900, p. 258). None of my informants claimed to have seen a lodge larger than 30 skins. Weasel Tail said the average Blackfoot lodge numbered 12 to 14 skins, figures also cited by Wissler (1910, p. 100). A lodge of that size was 14 to 16 feet in diameter at the base and provided sleeping accommodations for a family of 8, with their baggage.

Informants said that skin lodges had less lodgepoles in proportion to their size than the more recent canvas lodges. Weasel Tail said 19 poles were used for support of a 14-skin lodge (4 main poles, 5 secondary ones on each side, 2 near the door, 1 at the center of the back, and 2 ear-support poles). Modern Blackfoot who set up canvas-covered lodges in their Sun Dance encampments take pride in the length of their lodgepoles. In many lodges the poles extend 4 or more feet above the crossing. They criticize shorter poles, saying they look "like a crop-eared horse." However, in buffalo days only the wealthy could afford the extravagance of poles much longer than were needed to support their covers.[72]

Wealthy families among the Blackfoot made new lodges every summer, before the Sun Dance encampment. Cowskins collected during 342 556

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[72] Palliser (1863, p. 138) observed that Blackfoot lodges generally were larger and better furnished than those of the Cree, a tribe poor in horses. On the other hand, the horse-wealthy Crow tribe was renowned for having the finest lodges among the Upper Missouri tribes in buffalo days (Catlin, 1841, vol. 1, pp. 43–44; Lowie, 1922 a, pp. 222–223). [237] [171]

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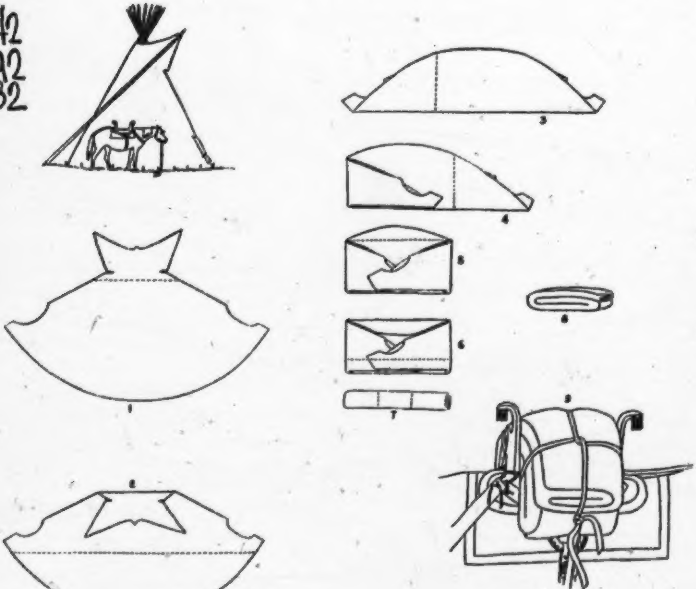

Figure 25.—A common method of folding a lodge cover for transportation by pack-horse, Blackfoot.

342 the summer months, when buffalo hair was short, were easier to dress
● 556 than those obtained during cooler weather. Near Fort McKenzie,
[237] August 9, 1833, Maximilian saw a Piegan camp of "old dirty brown leather tents" (Maximilian, 1906, vol. 23, p. 123). Apparently the covers had not been renewed at that date. Middle-class families generally renewed their lodge covers every other year, while poor families often were content to rely upon the kindness of wealthy men to give them old lodge covers after they had made new ones. The rich family's large cover was cut down to meet the needs of the poor one by trimming several feet off the base of it to make a much smaller cone.

342 The lodge cover was folded neatly and carefully to pack it for transport.
492 One of several methods of folding employed by the Piegan is illustrated in figure 25. Some women preferred to begin by rolling the sides of the lodge toward the center, then folded over the ear flaps, folding up a portion of the bottom and providing a somewhat larger pack. Others first made a fold along the vertical axis at the center

The Blackfoot hunter returned to camp riding his buffalo horse 224 while his wife took charge of the pack animals. There was a strong belief among the Blackfoot that the buffalo horse should never have 492 meat packed on it. However, poor people sometimes had little choice. The Blackfoot never packed meat on a race horse.[17]

LOANING OF BUFFALO HORSES FOR HUNTING

Owners of few horses among the Blackfoot rarely possessed a good 426 buffalo runner. They tried to borrow trained buffalo horses from wealthy relatives or band chiefs. The loan of buffalo horses not only 231 improved the opportunities of the poor but enhanced the prestige of [556] ● the loaner and proved his right to leadership. Some wealthy men owned as many as 10 or more trained buffalo horses, some of which they loaned the poor for hunting. Some men of wealth gave their wives buffalo horses, which they might loan to poor relatives. However, if a man found that his wife had loaned one of his buffalo runners without his knowledge, he might give her a sound beating. Horses were loaned for the duration of a chase. If the hunt was near camp they would be returned within the day.

Three Calf said his father loaned horses for buffalo hunting in this way:

> A man asked my father for the loan of a horse. Father told him, "Yes, get that pinto (pointing out a buffalo runner in his herd), and another horse to pack with if you need it." There was no agreement in advance for any payment to be made on the loan. If the borrower was appreciative he gave a lot of the best meat from the buffalo he killed to my father. If the man was selfish and offered my father no meat, the next time he wished to borrow horses, father told him, "No."
>
> If the buffalo runner met with an accident (suffered a broken leg or a rupture) while hunting on loan, and the borrower was known to be a reliable, earnest fellow, father told him, "That was nothing to be ashamed of. It was an accident. Young man, your body is worth more than the horse. Let's have no hard feelings." But if the borrower was an irresponsible fellow, father gave him a rough talking to, and made him replace the lost horse.

Informants agreed that there were no standardized repayments for the loan of buffalo horses. Payments depended upon a number of factors, including (1) whether meat was plentiful or scarce in the

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party of Mandan hunters seen by him in 1806 in which each horse was loaded with about [171] half a buffalo plus the weight of a rider (Henry and Thompson, 1897, vol. 1, p. 336). Either such references referred to instances of "light butchering" or the pack animals must have been greatly overloaded. In the Mandan case just cited the latter certainly was the case.

[17] Other Plains Indian tribes seem to have shared the taboo against carrying meat on a [171] buffalo horse. James (1823, vol. 1, p. 210) wrote that the Omaha (in 1819) "rarely subjected" buffalo runners "to the drudgery of carrying burdens." Tixier (1940, p. 193) observed among the Osage that "when a pack animal follows the hunter, the hunting horse returns to camp without any other burden but its rider." Turney-High (1937, p. 117) specifically mentioned the Flathead taboo against packing meat on a buffalo horse.

231 426 home of the horse owner at the time of the hunt, (2) whether the owner himself hunted and whether he was successful in this particular hunt, (3) the size and food needs of both the owner's and borrower's families, and (4) the generosity of owner and borrower. Some owners were themselves able hunters and generally would not accept meat or hides from the borrower. On the other hand, men who were too old to hunt or were physically handicapped (such as the wealthy Piegan blind man, Stingy), were forced to rely upon the buffalo killed by other men while riding their horses. If game was scarce the loaner expected a share of the meat killed by riders of his horses. However, it usually was not necessary for the borrower to give him as much as half the kill.

[171] The loaning of buffalo horses was a widespread Plains Indian custom.[18]

FEEDING THE POOR

224 735 Poor families which either were unable to borrow buffalo horses or possessed no able-bodied hunter in their lodges were forced to rely upon the charity of the wealthy for their buffalo meat. Some poor people took their dogs or poor horses out where buffalo were butchered, when the animals were killed near camp. There they could generally find successful hunters who would give them meat to carry home for their consumption. However, Weasel Tail recalled that hunters were loathe to give away the meat of fat cows. They generally preferred to give lean meat to the poor.

Mrs. Cree Medicine told the story of a young man who was found lying beside a partly butchered buffalo by an old couple who had gone out from camp hoping to receive some meat from the kill. The old couple thought he was dead. They threw water on him and he did not move. Then they started back to camp to tell the people of his death. When they had gone a short distance they turned around and saw

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[18] Tixier (1940, p. 184) wrote of the Osage, "The more horses that are owned by a savage, the more hunters he can send to the buffalo hunt." Llewellyn and Hoebel (1941, p. 229) told of a Cheyenne woman who loaned a horse to young men for hunting and received a hide or two in exchange. Kiowa men of wealth loaned horses for hunting, but Frank Bosin claimed the lender generally did not expect payment in meat. Elkin (1940, p. 224) described the Northern Arapaho practice in words that indicate that payments varied much as they did among the Blackfoot. Boller noted that a wealthy Hidatsa-Mandan "could always command the services of a good hunter." He also observed that a man who had lost his horses "will usually act as a hunter for some relative rich in horses, who by giving him a few robes now and then, in payment as it were for his services, affords him an opportunity to regain his former position" (Boller, 1868, pp. 52, 195). Mandelbaum (1940, p. 195) reported that among the Plains Cree, notoriously poor in horses, only about 1 lodge in 10 owned a good buffalo horse. "A number of families would attach themselves to the owner of such a horse and followed him wherever he moved his camp. They shared in the buffalo he was able to secure by means of his horse. Since these families were dependent on the horse owner for food, they were naturally quick to carry out his wishes or orders." [556] This is an extreme example of the correlation between buffalo horse ownership and leadership among Plains Indians. Yet even among the wealthier tribes the rich man's generous use of horses to benefit the poor served to pave his way to social and political distinction and helped him to maintain that position once attained.

THE HORSE AS A FACTOR IN SOCIAL RELATIONS

SOCIAL STATUS

421 A century and a half ago David Thompson (1916, p. 363) observed that the Piegan possessed "an inherent sense of the rights of individuals to their rights of property, whether given them, or acquired by industry, or in hunting. All these belong to the person who is in possession of them; and which gives him the right to defend any attempt to take them from him." Individual ownership of all property other than land was the rule among the three Blackfoot tribes. 422 Even sacred bundles, such as the natoas or Sun Dance bundle, the beaver bundle, and the medicine pipe bundle, which were manipulated for the good of the whole community, were individually owned and were transferred from one individual to another through elaborate ceremonies. Individual ownership of horses followed the Blackfoot pattern of ownership of other property.[78]

556 565 Blackfoot social stratification was grounded in respect for the right of the individual to own and to accumulate property. In historic times social stratification followed the economic status of the family head, whose wealth was determined primarily in terms of horse ownership. Three Calf stated that in his youth there were three classes among the Blackfoot: the rich, the poor, and the "in between" (middle class). Other informants frequently mentioned the two extremes without naming the middle class specifically. The classes may be briefly characterized as follows.

THE RICH

A man who owned some 40 or more horses was considered wealthy. This number of animals was more than ample to meet his normal family needs for horses to move his possessions and obtain food through hunting. His horses provided the means of acquiring a plentiful food supply, either through his own efforts or through those of other men to whom he loaned horses for buffalo hunting. Moreover, he obtained sufficient food surplus to enable him to entertain through feasts following a successful hunt and still permit his women folk to prepare extensive supplies of pemmican and dried meat in the fall

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[114] [78] Goldfrank's (1945, p. 6) informant who spoke of "band horses," either was misinformed or did not mean what he was reported to have said. The concept of community ownership of horses was foreign to Blackfoot economic theory and practice.

for winter subsistence. His many horses were the means of transporting surplus foods, one or more large lodges, and many other bulky 556 possessions. His surplus of robes were exchanged at the trading posts 565 for the most improved weapons, metal tools and household utensils, ornaments and trade cloth. He and members of his family dressed well. They owned several changes of clothing including expensive and elaborately decorated dress outfits. Their saddles and riding gear were well made and showy. He possessed the means to purchase membership in men's societies, to obtain important sacred bundles through ceremonial transfers, and to pay leading medicine men to care for sick members of his family. If his favorite wife had the moral qualifications she could reasonably anticipate an opportunity to play the role of medicine woman in the Sun Dance of the tribe. He and his sons could marry well, could have a large choice of mates and could support several wives. Before he died he could make a verbal [428] will dividing his wealth among his children to provide for their continued enjoyment of his many advantages.

Through careful management of his breeding stock he could increase his horse herds and hence his wealth. Yet he lived in constant fear of losing his horses from an enemy raid. Three Calf told of his father's loss of his entire herd through capture by an enemy raiding party. His father died not long afterward and friends said his death was due to his grief over the loss of his horses. Whether the grief was due primarily to his love for the stolen animals or to his feeling of loss of status and lowered standard of living after the horses were gone, is not clear. Probably both factors were involved.

There is evidence that wiser heads saw the folly of storing up treasure in horses alone. Buffalo Back Fat, head chief of the Blood tribe at the time of George Catlin's visit to Fort Union in 1832, handed down this sage advice to members of his family. It was remembered by Three Calf, a descendant of that chief:

> Don't put all your wealth in horses. If all your horses are taken from you one night by the enemy, they won't come back to you. You will be destitute. So be prepared. Build up supplies of fine, clean clothing, good weapons, sacred bundles and other valuable goods. Then, if some enemy takes all your horses, you can use your other possessions to obtain the horses you need.
>
> Call in the son of a man who owns a lot of fine horses. Offer the lad something valuable—a shield, a beautiful suit of clothes or some sacred object. The boy may not want it for himself but he will tell his father. When his father hears of your offer he will bring fine horses to obtain transfer of title to the proffered object. You can continue in this way to rebuild your herd by disposing of other valuable possessions.
>
> Furthermore, you will be sure of acquiring horses of the very best quality with which to start your herd anew. You know that when a man seeks to obtain a bundle or other valuable object every one in camp, his rivals as well as his relatives, knows about it and watches to see what he is offering in exchange.

556 So he will make a show of liberality by offering the best horses he has. Any other property he may offer along with the horses will be of the best quality—
565 blankets, robes, guns or other articles.

Wissler (1912 a, p. 276) found that the prestige gained from ownership of sacred bundles was never lost. "Even though one may fall a victim to utter poverty, he may still, if the ex-owner of many bundles, be spoken of as wealthy and powerful." The wealthy man who was also kind and generous need never fear reduction to abject poverty through loss of his horses. His many friends and relatives would give him horses to care for the needs of his household.[16] However, the wealthy man who was stingy was genuinely disliked by his fellow
556 men. Generosity was felt to be a responsibility of the wealthy.
577 They were expected to loan horses to the poor for hunting and moving camp, to give food to the poor, and to give away horses occasionally. They were expected to pay more in intratribal barter than were Indians who were not well to do. If the man of wealth had political ambitions it was particularly important that he be lavish with his gifts in order to gain a large number of followers to support his candidacy.

565 In numbers the wealthy comprised by far the smallest of the three
556 Blackfoot social classes. It is doubtful if they totaled 5 percent
162 of the Blackfoot population in buffalo days.

THE MIDDLE CLASS

565 The middle-class Blackfoot owned from 5 to less than 40 horses.
556 He was economically independent, possessing enough horses to hunt buffalo and move camp. Generally he could obtain adequate meat for his family, although many middle-class families could prepare and transport little winter reserve. He lived in a smaller lodge and entertained much less frequently or lavishly than the rich man. He had fewer robes to trade and consequently received less of the trader's desirable goods. Yet he tried, to the best of his ability to follow the styles set by people of wealth in clothing, ornaments, weapons, tools, household utensils, riding, and transport gear. But his possessions were fewer and, unless his wife or wives were expert and industrious craftswomen, his possessions usually were less elaborate than those of wealthy men. With the help of relatives he could muster horses and other costly items necessary to purchase a valuable sacred bundle. But, as Wissler (1912 a, p. 277) has stated, it was only the wealthy who could purchase large or important bundles without help.

[162] In numbers the middle class comprised the largest of the three Blackfoot classes, and the majority of the population. This class

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[171] [16] Denig said of the Crow, "If a man has all his horses stolen or killed, he can generally find friends to give him others, tho the giver expects payment when the receiver shall have retrieved his horses or be able to pay in some way" (Denig, 1953, p. 32).

graded almost imperceptibly into the wealthy class at the top and 565 the poor class at the bottom. Loss of a portion of their herd from an enemy raid could reduce many a middle-class family to poverty. 556

THE POOR

At the bottom of the economically determined social scale were the poor. They were far more numerous than the wealthy, but less numerous than the middle class. [162] At times they may have numbered 25 percent of the total population. Poor families were dependent upon their relatives or band leaders for even the economic essentials. They borrowed horses to move camp or used dogs for transport animals. They borrowed horses to hunt or received food from the more fortunate. Even their small homes often were the tops of old lodges discarded by wealthy owners, cut down to a size the poor people could transport. The poor family, owning less than 5 horses, had few other possessions. This family was easily recognized by the smallness of its lodge and the shabby appearance of its clothing, transport gear, household utensils, and weapons. Generally the poor owned no fancy dress clothing. Their parfleches were old, worn, and greasy; their rectangular rawhide bags unfringed. The poor man's gun, if he owned one, was generally an old muzzle-loader, broken and tied together with buckskin cord.

Undoubtedly, if the poor man had pride or ambition, he suffered greater mental anguish than physical discomfort. Fellow tribesmen saw to it that he did not starve. Yet he realized that he made a poor appearance among his people and that he owned none of the desirable possessions of members of the upper and middle classes. His self-respect suffered through inability to participate actively in many facets of Blackfoot life. He could not purchase important sacred bundles or membership in a society. His desires and opinions carried no weight in decisions involving band and tribal movements. His marriage prospects were very limited. The aged poor were sometimes [888] left behind when camp was moved owing to lack of adequate transport facilities.

Yet the lot of the poor in horses was no worse among the Blackfoot 565 than among the majority of other nomadic tribes and the horticultural tribes as well.[77] 556

Ferris (1940, p. 300) writing of the Indians of the northern Rockies 171 prior to 1835, stated:

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[77] Dorsey and Murie (1940, p. 115) estimated that the poor among the Skidi Pawnee comprised "less than one-half the members." They were "without influence or power, their lodges were smaller and not so completely furnished, they had few or no ponies, and were often the objects of charity." In 1840, Tixier (1940, p. 135) observed that among the Osage "there are poor people; and those who are poor have no horses, no means of hunting the bison in order to secure meat. They own neither huts nor blankets; they live, so to speak, at the expense of the community."

> 565 Some of the poorer classes, who do not possess horses, and are consequently
> unable to follow the buffalo in the prairies, ascend the mountains where deer, and
> 556 sheep are numerous, and pass their lives in single families—are never visited
> 171 by the horsemen of the plains, but sometimes descend to them, and exchange
> the skins of those animals for robes, and other articles of use and ornament.

175 Probably Ferris was referring to horseless Shoshoneans. Neverthe-
less, Alexander Henry (Henry and Thompson, 1897, vol. 2, p. 723)
556 in describing the Piegan in 1811, observed:

> 565 There are 30 or 40 tents who seldom resort to the plains, either in summer or
> 184 winter, unless scarcity of animals or some other circumstance obliges them to
> join their countrymen. This small band generally inhabit the thick, woody country along the foot of the mountains, where they kill a few beavers, and being industrious, they are of course better provided for than those Piegans who dwell on the plains.

My informant, Richard Sanderville, believed these were the ancestors of the North Piegan who now reside on a separate reserve west of Macleod, Alberta. The "North Piedgans" were named as a distinct band in 1850 (Culbertson, 1851, p. 144). In late buffalo days they still held their own Sun Dance and were recognized as skilled hunters and trappers of small game. Although by Henry's time these Indians were profiting from the fur trade and no longer appeared poor in comparison with the other Piegan, it is possible that their semiseparation from the main Piegan tribe may have been caused by poverty in horses at an earlier date, which made it difficult for them to live by hunting buffalo on the Plains in competition with other Piegan bands better supplied with horses.

CHANGES IN SOCIAL STATUS

565 In so far as the individual was concerned the Blackfoot system of
social status was not crystallized. It offered no positive security to
556 the wealthy. Overnight, as result of an enemy raid or a severe winter storm the rich man might lose his wealth in horses. There was always opportunity for the poor boy, who was also courageous and ambitious, to better his status. As Wissler (1912, pp. 288–289) observed, "the rich young dandies" did "not always turn out the greatest war chiefs, for it has often happened that poor young men have gone on the warpath, captured horses, bought fine clothes, and medicine bundles and become leaders among their people." Informants said ambitious boys of poor families generally started to war at an early age, were frequent participants in horse raids, and were inclined to take the most desperate chances. A few of these men became wealthy, many became respected members of the middle class, some never were successful in acquiring many horses, and others lost their lives in skirmishes with the enemy. The road from rags to riches via the horse-capture route was a long and perilous one.

Another avenue of advancement for the poor boy was through 565
service to a wealthy man, in caring for his horses, and helping him
in hunting in return for his own food and care. Orphans commonly 556
were taken into this service (Grinnell, 1892, p. 219).

Adoption into a family of wealth and distinction offered another 565
means of advancement for the poor boy. Three Calf cited the case
of a little boy found by Boy, a chief of the Small Robes band of 556
Piegan, in an abandoned Gros Ventres camp. Although Boy had 597
children of his own, he adopted the homeless waif. When the lad
grew older he cared for Boy's horses. Later he helped in hunting and
went on horse-raiding parties. He was successful in taking enemy
horses and once took a gun from an enemy. He began to raise a herd
of his own. He married a girl of good family, set up a medium-sized
lodge, and raised fine pinto horses. He began to acquire the best of
clothing and horse gear. Finally, after he had acquired 2 wives and
some 30 or more horses, he became a subchief of the Small Robes band.
As an old man he took the name of his Piegan benefactor, Boy. [553]

The practice of medicine offered a specialized medium of advancement for young women as well as men. A number of highly respected 565
women practitioners were remembered by informants. Through their 555
own visions and/or the teachings of established doctors young people 756
learned the use of various medicinal plants and techniques of their
administration. The person who could cure the sick or foresee the
future was able to demand payments for his services in horses and
other valuables.

Some men and women were able to better their condition through 565
their skill as craftsmen. No individual was remembered who attained
wealth solely on the basis of his or her skill in crafts. However, there 555
were men and women of the middle class whose incomes were materially enhanced through their ability to manufacture bows and arrows or
pipes of high quality (in the case of men), or lodges, clothing, riding
and transport gear (in the case of women). Many fine craftsmen
were older men whose age prevented their active participation in
hunting or horse raids.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

THE BAND

Wissler (1911, p. 22) properly considered the band "the social and 621
political unit" among the Blackfoot. In 1856, Blackfoot Agent Hatch
stated, "Each tribe is divided into bands, which are governed or led 622
by either a chief or a band-leader, the former office is hereditary,
the latter depends upon the bravery of the individual and his success
in war" (U. S. Comm. of Ind. Affairs, 1856, p. 625). Bradley's ex-

"That is how you get your leadership. When people want a chief they select a good hearted man." [78] 622

To dispense patronage the ambitious man required a degree of wealth. Probably this helps to explain why some early writers found that the chieftaincy appeared to run in families. Provided a member of a chief's family had a good war record he possessed a distinct advantage in the reputation of his family for past favors granted to members of his band. Other band members had confidence in his ability to use his inherited wealth to maintain the standard of generosity toward them set by his father or elder brother. 577 622 556

The Blackfoot band, the social and political unit throughout the greater part of the year, was a fluid organization. Both the number of bands and the membership of each was subject to almost continual change. Father Point, who spent the winter of 1846–47 with the Piegan claimed there were only "seven or eight fractions of the Piegan tribe" (De Smet, 1905, vol. 3, p. 952). Yet Wissler (1911, p. 21) listed 23 Piegan bands. While it is possible Point may have missed some Piegan bands in his calculation it is more probable that the bands named by Wissler were not all contemporaneous. Heavy losses attendant upon war casualties and severe epidemics necessitated combinations and regroupings of bands, to provide camps of sufficient strength to withstand and revenge enemy attacks. Population growth tended to encourage division of larger bands into smaller units requiring less buffalo for subsistence. Grinnell believed the existence of bands bearing the same name among two Blackfoot tribes was due to persons leaving one tribe to live with another who chose to preserve the name of their former band rather than unite with an existing band in their new tribe. He also claimed that "within the last forty or fifty years (i. e. since ca. 1840–50) it has become not uncommon for a man and his family, or even two or three families, on account of some quarrel or some personal dislike of the chief of their own gens (band), to leave it and join another band. Thus the gentes (bands) often received outsiders" (Grinnell, 1892, p. 210). Although Blackfoot bands may originally have been composed of groups of blood relatives, it is certain that, by processes such as described above, they became mixed long ago. In my informant's youth band exogamy was preferred but not obligatory. Both parents of some of my older informants were of families of the same band affiliation. 621 [582]

Informants indicated that poor people were the most migratory in their band affiliations. They became camp followers of the leader [735]

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[78] Opler indicated the situation was similar among the Southern Ute, "A man would be wanted for chief if he gave away horses to all those poor people" (Opler, 1940, p. 165). [171]

619 622 The tendency for the head chieftaincy to run in families has been more marked among the Blood Indians. Since ante-1869 the tribal head chieftaincy has descended in the family of Seen-from-Afar and Red Crow to the present (1951) chief, Shot-on-Both-Sides. Weasel Tail claimed that Buffalo Back Fat, head chief of the Blood Indians in 1832, fathered another tribal head chief who bore the same name.

It is certain that the head chief rose to office through distinction gained as a prominent band chief. The basic requirements of outstanding war record and generosity, therefore, were essential to his advancement.

648 622 556 Blackfoot recognition of social status upon the basis of horse ownership served indirectly to limit the power of both tribal and band chiefs in intertribal relations. Older chiefs, who had amassed considerable wealth, and who no longer went to war themselves, would lose more than they could gain through continued warfare. Often they looked with favor upon peace with some neighboring tribe. But their desires were thwarted by ambitious young men who could not be deterred from horse raids against the neighboring tribes in order to gain status for themselves. Father Point (in 1847) found Piegan young men willing to listen to his exhortations to cease stealing from neighboring tribes only if he "could immediately make 'Great Men' of them" (De Smet, 1905, vol. 3, p. 954).

MARRIAGE

582 556 The institution of marriage among the Blackfoot offered men of wealth opportunities for wide selection of women for wives, while the marital opportunities of the poor were restricted. A boy of a poor family, who was not very ambitious, had little chance of marriage except to a girl of his own social class. However, the father of a girl of rather loose morals, "who chased around with one fellow after another," might tell her, "You marry that poor fellow, and settle down." There were also orphan girls in camp, some of whom were flighty in their affections, available to marry poor boys. On the whole marriages tended to be contracted between persons of nearly equal status. A poor young man who had been successful in amassing a herd of 8 or 10 horses might be recognized as a young man with a future and might marry into a family of higher status. On the other hand, a wealthy man was besieged with offers of the daughters of ambitious parents of lower status.

583 585 431 Informants resented any implication of bride purchase in the Blackfoot marriage ceremony, insisting there was an exchange of gifts between the families of the bride and groom. This exchange of gifts has been mentioned in accounts of Blackfoot marriage by Bradley

583 (1923, pp. 272–273) and Grinnell (1892, pp. 211–216). The initial
585 proposal could be made by parents of either the young man or woman.
585 In either case it was a matter of pride for the family receiving the
431 first gifts to return gifts of greater value than those received. Horses
were virtually always among the valuable gifts exchanged. Bradley
585 (1923, p. 272) wrote that "two or three horses or their equivalent in
431 other goods constitute the customary offering in cases of intended
marriage." Green Grass Bull recalled one marriage in which the
231 groom's folks received over 40 horses from the bride's relatives. Yet
he said that he gave his wife's father only one horse when he married,
although later, when he returned from horse raids, he presented
horses to her father and her two brothers. Three Calf recalled a rare
instance of a father's offer of his daughter to a young man in return
for a certain horse that man owned which he coveted.[80]

POLYGAMY

162 In buffalo days the number of Blackfoot women far exceeded that
of men due primarily to heavy male war losses. (See p. 212.) At
595 the same time many hands were needed by successful hunters to prepare
their robes and skins for the fur trade and to manage their
595 households on the move and in camp. It was usual for wealthy men
to have several wives. Men of the middle class, in many instances,
556 were polygamous. Poor men generally were monogamous. There
were notable exceptions to this rule. One Piegan was known to have
possessed three wives and but one horse. He and his family had a
very difficult time moving their few belongings. On the other hand,
the wealthy Stingy had one wife. Many parents offered him their
daughters, but he refused, saying that more than one wife meant
trouble.

595 There seems to have been a common belief that the practice of
the sororate reduced the possibilities of jealousy and friction in poly-
587 gamous marriages. Double Victory Calf Robe, an aged Blood woman,
told me she was a wife in a polygamous union. Her two older sisters
were married to Iron Horn. One day her father told her, "My son-in-law
is very good to us. You better marry him and be with your
sisters." Her parents outfitted a horse and travois and she rode over
to Iron Horn's lodge. He accepted her, and gave horses to her father.
The exchange of gifts in this marriage of a third daughter to a son-

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[171] [80] Early references to the exchange of gifts, primarily of horses, in the marriage ceremonies of other Plains and Plateau tribes appear in the literature. Lewis and Clark noted this procedure among the Lemhi Shoshoni in 1805 (Coues, 1893, vol. 2, p. 557). Say reported gift exchanges in the Kansas marriage ceremony in 1819 (James, 1823, vol. 1, pp. 123–124); and Maximilian found them customary among the Mandan in 1834 (Maximilian, 1906, vol. 23, pp. 279–280).

Possession of a herd of horses was the prime requisite of the family 556
that would enjoy these advantages of a higher standard of living.
In historic Blackfoot culture that meant families of wealth and of 231
the middle class. Poor families not only lacked these advantages
but were handicaps to the more fortunate. When camp was moved 735
the latter were faced with the problem of slackening their pace to
that of the poor pedestrians, of leaving the poor families behind, 492
or of furnishing the poor with enough horses to move their meager
possessions at a more rapid rate. Enlightened self-interest motivated [426]
wealthy families in loaning some of their surplus horses to the poor
for moving camp.

It is noteworthy that the dog travois did not become entirely out- 178
moded after the acquisition of horses. The dog travois remained a
useful contrivance for gathering wood near camp and for auxiliary 492
transport in carrying light articles when camp moved. Lightly burdened dogs could keep pace with the more heavily burdened horses. Finally, possession of a number of dogs trained for travois duty served as insurance against some evil day when a family horse herd might be stolen by enemy raiders or lost through disease or winter storms, as well as against the hard winter when dogs might travel over crusted snows in which burdened horses would have bogged down.

INFLUENCE ON WARFARE

Saukamappee told David Thompson (1916, pp. 328–332) of large- 174
scale battles between the Piegan and Shoshoni in pre-horse times, in
which the opposing forces, although ostensibly seeking enemy scalps, 726
were content to form lines facing each other, barely within arrow [714]
range, protecting themselves behind large rawhide shields (3 feet in
diameter), while shooting arrows at their opponents from their long [411]
bows (the length of which came to their chins). This was a fire fight
which continued until darkness put an end to the battle. Casualties [727]
were few and there was no close contact if the numbers of the competing forces were nearly equal. Although the warriors carried lances, [411]
knives, and battle axes, they apparently made no use of these shock
weapons unless there was sufficient disparity in numbers between the
forces to encourage the larger one to close with the enemy.

The acquisition of guns and horses rendered that old, static, pri- 182
marily defensive, pitched battle obsolete. No longer could a warrior
hide behind his shield in safety. Accent shifted to offensive mobility. 726
Defensive weapons, the 3-foot shield and body armor, which impeded 411
movement on horseback, were discarded. Only a small, rawhide 492
shield, just large enough to cover the vital organs of a mounted warrior, was used for protection. Even muzzle-loading firearms were of [714]
limited service to the mounted warrior, who found difficulty in reload-

We have no detailed description of northern Plains slave-raiding 171 procedures, but the De Gannes memoir (Pease and Werner, 1934 b, pp. 375–388) gives a very clear account of Illinois slave raids against 726 the Pawnee and Quapaw ca. 1700. Many elements of the Illinois slave raid closely resembled those of Blackfoot horse raids of historic times. Particularly noteworthy are the following: (1) the slave raid was distinguished in procedure from that of the large war party seeking scalps, (2) slave-raiding parties were small, not ordinarily exceeding 20 persons, (3) members carried birdskin war medicines, (4) youngest members performed menial tasks for experienced raiders, (5) scouts were sent ahead of the outgoing party to reconnoiter the enemy, (6) inexperienced members remained with the baggage in a concealed location, while (7) experienced men made a dawn attack on the enemy camp to secure prisoners, (8) the raiding party made a speedy departure with their prisoners, marching two days and nights without stopping, (9) the capture of a prisoner was reckoned as a war honor of higher rank than the killing of an enemy.

This slave-raiding pattern may have been an old one, widespread among Algonquian and perhaps other tribes as well, and known to the pre-horse Blackfoot Indians. Certainly, elements of this raid are clearly observable in the pattern of the Blackfoot horse raid of the 19th century as described by my informants and in the literature (see pp. 177–189).

The primary motive for Blackfoot horse raiding in the 18th century, 175 when horses were new to the Blackfoot country, must have been economic—the desire to obtain animals needed for hunting buffalo and 721 transporting baggage. I believe the economic motive remained dominant until the end of buffalo days. Need, not greed or glory, was the major stimulus impelling most young men to engage in the hazardous time and energy-consuming enterprise of the horse raid. Wealthy [556] Blackfoot comprised a small minority. They were generally men of middle or advanced years, many of whom were unusually successful as breeders of horses. The average Blackfoot family found it difficult to [511] meet the needs of its nomadic existence with the number of horses it possessed. There were few young men who did not need more horses than their families could spare them if they were to marry and raise families; while the sons of poor families, who far outnumbered the favored children of the rich, were noted as the most active and inveterate horse thieves. The fact that a captured horse counted as a 175 war honor served as a secondary stimulus to horse raiding. But we must not overestimate the importance of that stimulus. This was a 721 low-grade coup, an impressive assemblage of which alone would not 703 qualify a man for leadership in his band.

176 buffalo horse, was the greatest asset of the race horse, for the course,
as a rule, was a lengthy one. No other horse was as highly prized by
541 the Blackfoot as was the winning racer.

231 Indirectly the horse influenced other forms of Blackfoot recreation.
I have described (pp. 236–238) the introduction of horse symbolism
231 into the intersociety hoop and pole game. The common employment
182 of valuable horses as stakes in gambling must have encouraged interest
[526] in other games of chance even though the games themselves may have
[525] been known to the Blackfoot in earlier times.

INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL LIFE

174 During the Pedestrian Culture Period, when men literally stood
on an equal footing, class distinctions must have been less marked than
565 in historic times. The cooperative hunt was an organization of near
● 556 equals in which the kill was equally divided among participating
182 families. Limited transportation facilities inhibited the accumulation of property and militated against social stratification based upon
[554] wealth. Undoubtedly individuals who achieved outstanding war records or possessed supernatural powers to call the buffalo (beaver
bundle owners), to cure the sick, or to perform acts of magic attained
positions of distinction and leadership which ranked them above the
average man.

175 After the introduction of horses permitted the accumulation of
231 property, social status came to depend less upon a man's physical
and mental qualities and more upon the number and quality of his
182 possessions. A class system began to develop in which there were
565 rich, middle-class, and poor families, distinguished primarily on the
556 basis of their relative wealth or poverty in horses.

The rich man owned not only the most horses but generally the best ones as well. Wealth in horses permitted rich men to care for and use their animals so as to increase their numbers and enhance their value. Rich men owned the largest and best-furnished lodges, the finest clothing, and the most sacred and valuable medicine bundles. They also enjoyed certain privileges denied the other classes. They had the widest choice of mates in marriage and could take the most wives. They could even get away with murder by presenting horses to relatives of the deceased man. On the other hand, the rich man was expected to accept responsibilities which men of the other classes did not shoulder. He was expected to assist the poor through gifts of food and horses and loans of horses for buffalo hunting and moving camp. He was expected to be generous in his hospitality and liberal in his barter with others. Probably no one was more genuinely disliked by the majority of the Blackfoot than the stingy man of wealth.

Blackfoot Indians of the middle class shared the advantages of 175
that higher standard of living made possible by the ownership and
use of horses. Generally their possessions were more modest in number, 231
size, and/or quality than those of rich people, but they were surely 182
finer and more numerous than those of the average Blackfoot in prehorse 565
times. The middle-class man possessed the means to enable him
to participate fully in the social, economic, and religious life of his 556
band and tribe. On rare occasions he might need assistance from his
relatives in assembling horses for gifts or purchases.

It is questionable, however, whether the poor were not worse off than they would have been in the Pedestrian Culture Period. Their possessions actually may have been no more meager than were those of the average family in earlier times. But during the Horse Culture Period their lodges, clothing, weapons, etc. were so inferior as to make their living definitely substandard. Lack of horses alone prevented them from hunting buffalo or moving camp with their fellows unless they received assistance through loans of horses by wealthy relatives or band leaders. They became dependent followers of the leader who offered them most in economic security. Their poverty denied them participation in many activities which previous writers have considered typical of Blackfoot culture in general, such as the companionship of polygamous marriage, membership in societies, the wearing of elaborately decorated dress clothing, and the manipulation of complex and powerful sacred bundles.

Yet under the conditions of life prevailing in buffalo days the Blackfoot class system did not become crystallized. Hazards beyond their control prevented members of the wealthy class from becoming permanently entrenched. Enemy horse raiders, winter storms, or disease might wipe out the rich man's herd quickly and without warning. Buffalo-Back-Fat's sage advice to members of his family (pp. 241–242) to invest heavily in valuable other than horses, might have counteracted the damaging effects of such losses upon social status had it been more widely followed. If wealth might be short-lived, poverty need not be permanent for the poor young man who possessed ambition and courage. Through aggressive action, in repeated raids upon enemy camps, he might acquire the horses necessary to raise both his economic and social status. The rise of poor but ambitious young men as well as the fall of unfortunate wealthy families kept the class system fluid.

Women's status was decidedly improved as a result of the acquisition 175
of horses. Women were emancipated from the toil of carrying
heavy burdens in moving camp and from active participation in prolonged 231
hunts afoot. Some of the time and energy they saved may 182
have been devoted to the perfection of arts and crafts for which there
must have been an increased demand, now that people could transport 562

It was not until the American Fur Co. established a post on the 175
Missouri (1831) in Blackfoot country, and that company began to
accept buffalo robes in trade, that the Blackfoot became important 439
procurers of animal skins for the fur trade. Long before that time
the Blackfoot had become experienced in the use of horses. Only
through the use of horses for killing and transporting buffalo could
the great number of robes supplied the traders by the Blackfoot in
the period ca. 1835–80 have been obtained. Only through the exploitation
of cheap and accessible land and water transportation
could traders handle a sufficient volume of heavy, bulky, and relatively
cheap buffalo hides to make trade in them profitable. The
mountain men, who continued to collect the furs of smaller mammals
and to transport them overland, made as extensive use of horses in
their operations as did the Blackfoot, whom they tried to avoid.

Larpenteur's statement (p. 29, this bulletin) equating wealth in 556
horses, polygamy, and extensive trade at the posts clearly shows the 231
correlation between Indian wealth in horses (which permitted the killing
of many buffalo), the polygamous union (which provided many 595
female hands to dress robes and skins for market), and large-scale 439
trade at the posts. It was the wealthy Indian who was the primary 182
patron of the trading posts. Poor men had few robes to offer.

The fur trade furnished to the Indians new materials for use in 177
their manufactures, arts, and crafts. Their use of horses influenced
the form and function of many of the items made from these new 439
materials. Metal knives obtained in trade greatly facilitated the 231
manufacture of articles of rawhide. But these articles were primarily 182
saddles, harness, and transport luggage especially designed
for use in moving camp with horses. The fur trade supplied glass
beads, cloth, metal, and shell for use in making and decorating articles
of clothing, as well as horse gear. Yet in designing these articles
the Indians were mindful of the enhancement of their appearance
on horseback. Generally it was the wealthy family that possessed the
most elaborately decorated costumes and riding and transport gear.
Those who owned no horses had none of them.

Both the horse and the gun influenced Indian warfare, encouraging 492
the abandonment of fighting in closely grouped, static lines, in favor
of mobile, spread formations. Both horse and gun encouraged the 411
abandonment of heavy, rawhide body armor which impeded physical 182
movement without providing adequate protection from gunfire. 726
When first employed by the Blackfoot against enemies unfamiliar
with the use of firearms, the muzzle-loading flintlock created a panic
among their opponents out of all proportion to its true effectiveness 411
as a fire weapon (Thompson, 1916, pp. 330–332). But in later years, 182
after both the Blackfoot and their neighbors were armed, the muzzle- 726

Indian pony gradually was replaced by larger and stronger animals 178
resulting from the breeding of white men's work horses with the
Indians' stock. 231

Nevertheless, the continuity of Blackfoot culture was not entirely broken by the cultural revolution that followed the disappearance of the buffalo and the abandonment of the nomadic, hunting existence. In the 1940's, six decades after the buffalo were gone, the influence of the Horse Culture Period of buffalo days survived. Survivals were noticeable in Blackfoot work habits, their concepts of wealth, their recreation, social relations, and ideals.

After the buffalo were gone the Blackfoot took readily to cattle 233
raising but showed little interest in or aptitude for farming, which
involved techniques and procedures alien to their experience. In the 241
1940's Agricultural Extension Agents on the Blackfeet Reservation 178
in Montana recognized that the successful Indian farmers were persons of considerable white admixture. The fullblood group showed little interest in settling on the irrigated projects to grow crops. Fullbloods still preferred to make their living by raising livestock, primarily cattle and sheep. This preference is traceable to the tribe's generations of accumulated experience in the care of horses and its lack of crop-growing traditions.

I have pointed out (p. 30) the survival of the concept of 178
wealth in terms of horse ownership among the older fullbloods on
this reservation, even though horses in the 1940's had relatively little 556
monetary value. This is definitely a survival from the days when 231
individual wealth was determined primarily in terms of horse ownership.

I have also (p. 234) referred to the survival of interest in horse 178
racing, long a favorite sport among the Blackfoot. In fact their
ready acceptance of the entire rodeo complex may be attributed to 541
their background of appreciation of skill in the handling of horses. [177]

There remains an appreciation of the value of ceremonial bundles
among the Blackfoot which is out of all proportion to the function 178
of those bundles in the religious life of these people in modern times.
A number of bundle owners have neither the knowledge nor the desire 778
to use these sacred bundles ceremonially. Yet they are reluctant to part with them, mindful of the fact that their former owners prized them as equivalent in value to many horses. The horse medicine cult, [794]
though limited in function, still holds a respected position in the religious life of the fullbloods.

Blackfoot social relations are still marked by the dependence of 178
poor relatives upon tribal members who have achieved a degree of
economic success. This drain of the "have-nots" upon the "haves" 571
has the effect of limiting the economic progress of ambitious indi- 454

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chase).”[122] These numbers appear to be extreme but they are borne out by information recently gathered in the field by the writer. One informant told of her great-grandfather, Chief Many Horses, who had twenty wives. This was in about 1855. Our material therefore suggests that the sharpest spurt in the increase in wives occurred after 1833, a period which coincides with the increase in the buffalo hide trade both in Canada and The United States.[123]

The possession of a large number of wives was a source of wealth and was therefore cherished by the Blackfoot. The missionaries learned this when they attempted to suppress polygyny. Said a Blackfoot chief, [556] [797]

> “Tell the priest . . . that if he wishes to do anything with my people he must no longer order them to put away their wives. I have eight all of whom I love, and all have children by me—Which am I to keep and which to put away? . . . ”

The traveler, the Earl of Southesk continues,

> “This chief however injured the moral force of his remarks by going on to say that his eight wives could dress a hundred and fifty skins in the year whereas a single wife could only dress ten, supposing that she was always well, and that such a loss was not to be thought of.”[124] [461]

Since wives had to be paid for in horses we must briefly consider the relation of this expansion in polygyny to the accumulation of horses and the growth of herding. We know that the Blackfoot first obtained their horses from the Shoshone in 1730. When Henday visited the Piegan in 1754 he described them as mounted but makes no mention of herds.[125] The same applies to Cocking's description of the Blackfoot in 1774.[126] In 1787 Thompson describes Blackfoot horses and though he does not specifically mention herding he states that he saw a group of thirty horses and a dozen mules at the camp at which he was staying.[127] In 1800 Thompson was again with the Blackfoot but he recorded nothing new on this matter. But in 1808 Alexander Henry, the younger, writes, “ . . . some of the Blackfoot own forty to fifty horses. But the Piegan have by far the greatest numbers. I heard of one man who owns three hundred . . . . ”[128] By 1833 we find that Maximilian reports as many as 4000 and 5000 horses owned by one wealthy

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[122] Sir Cecil Denny, *The Law Marches West*, p. 51.

[123] There was a great disproportion in the sex ratio due to the increased casualties in warfare. In 1847 Father Point estimated that between two thirds and three quarters of the adult population were women. See DeSmet, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, p. 952.

[124] Earl of Southesk, *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains*, p. 155.

[125] Henday, *op. cit.*, pp. 337-338.

[126] Cocking, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

[127] Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 371.

[128] Henry and Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

175 Piegan chief.[129] Although this evidence is scanty it certainly is suggestive
231 of an increase in the size of herds. What is most significant for our purposes
175 is that by 1833, the time when the large markets for tanned robes in the
States first developed, there already existed an accumulation of horses
178 that made possible the ensuing expansion of polygyny. This expansion in
231 turn perpetuated and intensified the social gradations that already existed,
[595] for men with large herds were the ones who could purchase many wives,
● [556] and in the exchange thereby transform idle capital (surplus horses) into
productive capital (women).

175 Following the growth of polygyny and the increasing importance of the
178 bride price in horses we find that the age at which marriages occurred
was also altered. There was a tendency for girls to marry at a younger
582 age and for men to marry at a later age. In 1787 Thompson reported that
girls usually married between sixteen and eighteen, and men at twenty-two
or somewhat later.[130] In 1885, Rev. Wilson's informants told him that girls
[124] normally married at twelve.[131] Our own informants, speaking of the period
of the latter half of the nineteenth century, placed the age of marriage for
girls between ten and sixteen and that of men at thirty-five, rarely at less.
[581] It is during this period that we get the first cases of child marriage. Fathers
now wished to marry off their daughters as early as possible in order to
[583] realize the bride price. On the other hand, men were not chosen as sons-in-law until they had accumulated sufficient property and had acquired a
good reputation as a warrior or hunter.

178 The increase in the number of wives brought greater friction within the
595 household. The effect of the sororate in eliminating hostilities diminished
593 and at the same time the contrasts between the status of upper and lower
578 wives were intensified. The native term for a wife lower than third or
fourth means slave wife, which accurately describes their status. Lower
[587] wives performed the most difficult tasks, rarely put up Sun Dances, were
most often beaten and most often suspected of adultery.

Social Organization

177 The fur trade stimulated inter-tribal intercourse. Tribes which had little
contact with each other met at trading posts with the result of much borrowing and spreading of culture elements. A case in point is the borrowing
177 of age grade societies by the Blackfoot from some of the village tribes to
561 the south.

The historical material offers little in the way of positive evidence for the

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[129] Thwaites, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[130] Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 350.

[131] Wilson, *Report of the Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the British Assoc. for the Adv. of Science*, Sept. 1885, p. 192.

177 178 very important as a medicine object, deriving its power from the symbols
724 painted upon it.[166]

411 714 The camp circle is recent among the Blackfoot. When Henday visited
[778] the Blackfoot in 1754 he came upon 200 tents camped in two parallel lines
with an open avenue between them.[167] Jenness suggests that this arrange-
175 ment was "very satisfactory for repelling slow infantry attacks, but not the
178 sudden raids of mobile horsemen."[168] Undoubtedly the adoption of the
712 camp circle was also related to their attempts to protect their newly ac-
361 quired horses from raiding parties, for Maximilian tells us that horses
were kept in corrals within the camp circle.[169] The origin of the camp circle
721 among the Blackfoot may therefore tentatively be attributed to the changes
in warfare consequent to the introduction of the horse on the Plains.[170]

721 More important, warfare had become an integral part of the new Black-
foot economy. To better understand this relationship we must consider
433 briefly the role of the horse in Blackfoot economy.

231 The importance of horses can be gauged by the extensive native terminology used to describe them. The writer has gathered more than twenty terms describing the types and qualities of horses. Horses were classified according to their functions, as race horses, war horses, travois horses and pack horses; and by their special abilities, as "horses that can go long distances", "horses that can run in deep snow", etc. It is clear that horses were valued for their aid in hunting, in war and in transportation.
[436] But, in addition to their utilitarian and productive values, horses became
[556] a medium of exchange and the main form of wealth.

The accumulation of wealth, the manipulation of property, spending,
231 buying, and selling, dominated Blackfoot life. Social position depended
556 upon the liberal use of wealth, ostentatious display, and other forms of social investment. Every step in religious and secular ritual involved property payments, and the number of horses that changed hands in the bundle transfers, and the buying into societies was truly remarkable.
[554] The ownership of horses therefore became a major index of social status.

000 The ownership of horses had still further importance, for horses were

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[756] [166] An attempt on the part of the American Fur Co. to introduce polished metal shields was effectively blocked by the medicine men who as Bradley tells us, "would
[434] have thus been deprived of an important source of revenue." Bradley, *op. cit.*, Vol. 9, p. 282.

[167] Henday, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

[168] Diamond Jenness, *The Sarsi*, p. 13.

[169] The arrangement of two parallel lines was used in marching, as is described in Stanley's account of 1854: ". . . in less than one hour the whole encampment was drawn out in two parallel lines on the Plains, forming one of the most picturesque scenes I have ever witnessed." *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (1854), p. 200.

[170] Idem.

The ownership of horses had still further importance, for horses were 231
used as capital, earning interest for the owner in the form of a "gift" of
additional horses or equivalent property from the borrower. When a man 471
had a number of horses over and above the domestic needs of his family, 426
the surplus could be loaned out. With the accumulation of large herds this lending of horses became general. Horses were borrowed for use in hunting and war parties. The borrower had to give in return one half of the game killed, and one half of the loot captured.[171] In this way, owners of huge herds, who had long given up the war path, could replenish their supply of horses by frequently lending them to poor young men.

A large surplus of horses was not necessary for lending. Men who were too old to hunt and old women who had no relatives upon whom to rely, could secure food and clothing for themselves if they owned but two horses. Horses were looked upon as a source of security in one's old age, a point oft repeated to young men.

Horses were also in demand at the trading posts and were used by the 231
Blackfoot to pay for goods, ammunition, liquor, tobacco, and other sup- 436
plies. As we have seen, the Blackfoot never took to the trapping of small 439
game on a large scale. They had few furs for exchange before the 1830's
and relied upon horses almost from the start. Blackfoot horse trading was [175]
carried on as early as 1774, as shown by Cocking.[172] This need for horses, both for the tribal economy and for trading purposes, gave continual impetus to horse-stealing parties.

The organization of a raiding party was a purely individual affair. A 721
party was organized by the man who wished to be the leader. He notified a number of carefully selected men of his intentions and arranged for a meeting at which the plans would be discussed. Participation in a raiding party was determined by rank, equipment, and the relationship to the
leader. The party normally was composed of members of one band; brothers [621]
and brothers-in-law were a favorite raiding unit for they could thereby
keep the horses in the family. The leader never invited a man superior to 721
him in war record nor would such a man raid under him. Similarly, a poor 554
man would not attempt to lead a group of wealthier men, even though they were younger.[173] A man of high status, whether it be in terms of war record,

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[171] The rigidity of the interest concept could not be ascertained, though all informants insisted upon the fifty percent principle. Probably much depended upon the relationship of the "contracting" parties. A somewhat different arrangement is reported by Jane Richardson for the Northern Blackfoot. Here the hired men under the famous chief, Crowfoot, gave him the entire loot and catch in return for which they were fed and clothed by the chief and received some horses upon their marriage. See J. Richardson, *Northern Blackfoot*, Mss.

[172] Cocking, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

[173] A poor man, "kimataps" is one who has not or never had any valuable property [556] ●
or religious articles. A man with a good war record would not be called "kimataps" though he may have little or no property.

721 wealth in horses or the ownership of medicine bundles, would refuse to be
554 led by one of lower standing. Not only were the poor rarely leaders, but
[556] they often had difficulty in joining a raiding party, for participation was
limited to those who had the necessary equipment—a gun, powder and ammunition, a good supply of moccasins, dried provisions, protective war charms, and, when the party went on horse, a good horse.

721 With adequate skill, any member of the tribe could produce the equipment necessary for the early type of warfare, but the new equipment, guns
554 and ammunition, could be purchased from the trading posts only by those
556 who had a surplus of horses, dried provisions or hides. This put the poor
184 at a distinct disadvantage, and was a check upon vertical mobility. This
[439] also gave a new paternalistic role to the chief as a distributor of valuable goods.

721 Differences between rich and poor were reflected in their participation in war in still another way. Not owning war bonnets, beautiful head-
556 dresses, or medicine pipes, the poor went to the hills to seek supernatural
184 power for a successful war party, while those who could afford it bought
[787] their charms from renowned medicine men. Despite this handicap, inform-
[778] ants relate that the poor were the most daring on horse-stealing parties,
[432] for they had the least to lose and the most to gain.

Normally, raiding parties started out in the early spring, the summer
721 or the fall, rarely the winter, for the Blackfoot did not like to go out in cold weather. A wise leader would leave at nightfall, travel until dawn, and
[342] then rest during the day in shelters constructed in the foot-hills.

The function of the leader consisted mainly in enforcing simple precau-
721 tionary rules, such as prohibiting a fire for cooking, or the shooting of
701 game once in enemy territory. Every party had one or two scouts who reported to the leader. When the party neared the camp of the enemy the leader decided who was to do the raiding. If the party was small it would break up, every man for himself, and arrange to meet at an appointed spot. In other cases, the leader ordered some to stay, usually the inexperienced or the poorer ones, while the leader, alone or with a choice few, went for the horses. This rear guard duty was resented for there was a possibility that they would not be allowed to share the loot. The chief
[431] might present them with a horse, a gift which they were expected to acknowledge at the victory dance.[174] Many parties broke up because of this,
[727] those ordered to remain behind often disobeying and going out for their own horses. In cases where the party was mounted and had ambushed the enemy, this individualism was even more marked. It was every man for
[727] himself with a great deal of snatching and bickering over the loot, even among brothers.

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[174] J. Richardson, Mss.

The leader divided the loot, irrespective of whether he obtained the 721
horses or remained behind, provided, of course, that the party had not 727
broken up. If a split occurred, every man retained what he had gotten 701
and there were no recriminations. In the division of the spoils, the leader
was guided by the relative age and status of the men and by their part in capturing the horses. It is not clear from the material how these considerations were weighted. In no case did the leader return empty-handed. Unlike the Comanche, the Blackfoot were not content with the prestige of leadership alone.[175]

The return of a successful war party was an impressive event and occa- 727
sioned general rejoicing and feasting. The party stopped a few miles from the camp, painted their faces, put on their war clothing, and drove quietly to the top of a hill overlooking the camp. "There they would begin the war song, whip the horses to a mad run, and firing guns and driving before them animals they had taken, charge swiftly down the hill into the bottom."[176]

If there were only a few casualties, or if the casualties befell men of little 731
importance or with few relatives, a victory dance would be held, at which 431
there was much exchange of property. Young, unmarried men gave most
of their captured horses to older relatives. Since one principle of the division
of loot was age, distribution of even a few gifts soon exhausted the loot of
the young men. Young men had to go to war from six to ten times before [556]
they could accumulate enough horses for an impressive bride price. In [583]
giving away their loot they were establishing a source of future credit and [182]
aid in joining societies or in raising a bride price. Married men retained
more for themselves and went to war less frequently than the unmarried.
Scalps given to relatives or friends were repaid by a gift of a buckskin suit [437]
or a horse. Modern informants emphasize the trade value of scalps.[177]

The classical view of nineteenth century Plains warfare is that it was in 721
the nature of a sporting game for honor, prestige and scalps. If this were
true at all, it was, for the Blackfoot, characteristic of the period before the
introduction of the horse and gun, and loot in horses as the dominating
motive. Coup was largely ruled out in the parties organized for raiding 721
because of the necessity for stealth and the desire to avoid face to face 555
encounters. While it is true that the capture of a picketed horse rated high as a war deed, it did not compare with the taking of a gun and was not a formal requirement for chieftainship. As a matter of fact, the seeking of coup was confined to defensive encounters where the possibility of loot was

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[175] See E. Adamson Hoebel, "The Political Organization and Law-Ways of the Comanche Indians," *Memoirs of the Amer. Anthro. Assoc.*, Number 54, 1940.

[176] Schultz, *My Life as an Indian*, p. 47.

[177] J. Richardson, Mss.

721 necessarily ruled out. Defensive battles were the occasion for a show of
555 bravery, for the capture of guns, shields and bonnets. The prestige derived
[178] from the counting of these coup and from the ceremonial recitation of war
deeds, though present, was in later years overshadowed by the prestige of
wealth.

554 The relative importance of war honors and wealth can be judged from the
556 fact that bravery and war deeds, the usual requirements for chieftainship
on the Plains, though important, were here not essential. There were many
622 chiefs who had never been on the warpath but who had achieved their
[555] position by their kindness, generosity, good judgement and wealth.[178]
Even a coward, "kopum", one who feared the warpath, could become a
chief, provided he had accumulated sufficient wealth to attract followers.
By giving frequent feasts, spreading gifts judiciously and buying into the
beaver and medicine-pipe societies, any man could gain considerable prestige.
This is made more striking when we compare the place of war honors
[191] and the counting of coups in Crow life with that among the Blackfoot.
The Crow had an elaborate and systematic grading of war honors which was
[556] absent among the Blackfoot.

We have indicated earlier that large war parties were used to keep the
726 Plateau tribes out of the Plains. Large parties were also occasioned by two
other situations. First, in attacks against the trading posts where the motive
was solely loot, and second, when the people felt the death of a prominent
warrior or chief at the hands of an enemy as a tribal loss. In such cases,
parties were organized in the spring or summer when the bands came to-
[628] gether for the Sun Dance. The revenge parties were composed of members
[796] of a few bands, rarely of the whole tribe. It is significant that even on these
revenge parties, and this applies both to the large and the small, loot was
never overlooked.

726 There were, however, fundamental differences between the organization
178 and motives of the large parties of pre-horse days and those of later ones.
The latter were no more than expanded raiding parties. That is, the large
party of warriors broke up into small units which acted like the small
raiding party intent upon plunder instead of maintaining a unified army
under centralized control.

177 The existence of highly organized warfare among the Blackfoot in the
pre-horse period is of special interest in view of the fact that the coming of
178 the horse has become associated in a general way with the development of
231 a high degree of political organization. This process has been shown for the
[191] southern Ute of Colorado where the advent of the horse consolidated the
small family groups into large bands and transformed a peaceful, retiring

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[178] A favored son was not expected to go on the warpath but often became a chief.

population into a predatory and dominating people.[179] Much the same 177
process occurred among the Sahaptin people of the southern Plateau and 178
among the Kutenai and Flathead to the east and north. Here, the change 231
was from the small village units to that of large band organizations.[180] 171
In this case, the stimulus for the changes was the horse, plus the necessity
of presenting a powerful front against the tribes of the Plains.

The Blackfoot exemplify a very different process, in which the effect of 231
the horse was to bring about a decentralization in political organization 178
and a fluorescence of individualism. The Blackfoot had already achieved
a remarkable degree of political organization in pre-horse times, when the [621]
activities of the bands, at least for war purposes, were unified under a central leader. 178

The concerted action of early tribal warfare was a cohesive force in 182
Blackfoot culture. Far from acting as a unifying factor, the introduction of 177
the horse and gun represented a disruptive one. Later warfare carried on 231
by the small raiding parties became essentially a means of individual aggrandizement [411]
in which the tribal interests gave way to those of the indi- [721]
vidual. Differences between rich and poor became more clearly defined and
cut across all institutions. Some chiefs owned thousands of horses while the [556] ●
poor owned none. This developed to a point of incipient social stratification
on the basis of horse ownership which resulted in internal disunity.

We can now briefly summarize the more important changes that occurred 721
in warfare as a result of the introduction of the horse and gun and fur 178
trade. The pre-horse motives of warfare, that is, vengeance and the defense 177
and expansion of the tribal hunting grounds persisted, but were displaced
in importance by raiding for loot. The religious element in scalping dropped [727]
out and scalps were sought for only as trophies of war. There followed changes in organization and tactics. Large massed forces under central leadership gave way to the small raiding party under a temporary leader; open battles with a great show of numbers became less frequent. Instead, stealth, secrecy and ambuscade were employed. Equipment as over against mere numbers became a vital factor. Casualties increased and warfare became a serious and deadly affair.

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[179] Marvin Opler, "The Southern Ute of Colorado," *Acculturation in Seven American Tribes*, p. 123.

[180] Teit, *Salishan Tribes of the Western Plateau*, pp. 151-152.

454 431 he expects another in a week." In time of need loyal followers would quickly rally to the aid of their "generous leader."[31]

556 231 175 Technical skill and bravery played an essential role both in hunting and raiding, but a wealth differential that could not be said to depend entirely on these virtues was early apparent. In 1808, Alexander Henry, the nephew, wrote, "Some Blackfoot own 40 to 50 horses. But the Piegans have by far the greatest number. I heard of one man who had 300."[32] Two years later, he mentions "one young Piegan who complains of being lame and has no horse."[33] In 1832 Maximilian noted that a Piegan chief possessed between 4000 and 5000 horses.[34] At another point he writes, "There were fifteen to twenty horses grazing about the tent, but there are Blackfoot who possess a much greater number."[35] Bradley estimates that around the year 1830 the Piegans averaged ten horses to a lodge, the Blackfeet and Bloods, five.[36] Of the Blood chief, Seen from Afar, who died in 1870, he says, "He was the greatest chief Major Culbertson ever saw amongst the Blackfeet—having ten wives and 100 horses."[37] Charles Larpenteur, a fur trader, writing of the period around 1860 states, "It is a fine sight to see one of those big men among the Blackfeet, who has two or three lodges, five or six wives, twenty or thirty children, and fifty to one hundred horses."[38] Such famous headmen as Crowfoot boasted more than a hundred horses and "hired" poor young men to hunt and raid for them.[39] In the light of the combined evidence, the excessive figure given by Maximilian must be questioned, as has been done recently and effectively.[40] But the fact that marked wealth differences persisted throughout this period seems well substantiated.

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[31] Although occurring in 1893, i.e., in the Reserve period, the following is suggestive: Eagle Bear, a chief, lost thirty-five of his sixty horses in a blinding snowstorm. "His friends felt sorry for him and made him presents, for he always had been considered a generous man. In the end he had received more than he had lost."

[32] Alexander Henry and David Thompson, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest. The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson, 1799–1814*. Vol. 2, p. 526.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 661.

[34] Maximilian, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 265.

[36] James H. Bradley, *Characteristics, Habits and Customs of the Blackfeet Indians*, p. 288.

[37] Bradley, *Affairs at Fort Benton*, p. 258.

[38] Charles Larpenteur, *Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri*, Vol. 2, p. 401.

[39] Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 55 note, quoting Jane Richardson, Northern Blackfoot, Mss.

[114] [40] John C. Ewer, *Were the Blackfoot Rich in Horses?* p. 622 ff. It is however, more than possible that Maximilian's figure, though obviously exaggerated, may actually refer to band horses. Such an easy confusion is expressed even today. In 1939, the son of a chief stated that his father owned 1000 horses. Later he referred to these horses as "band" horses. While discussing the bad winter of 1893, he said, "My

Achieving Prestige

Inevitably, the activities of the man without horses or with only a few 554 were limited. While his personal bravery might be unquestioned, the poor 556 man could not hope to organize or direct a war party—the chief road to social recognition—for no man of greater wealth would submit to his leadership.[41] Eager to participate in a hunt or raid but lacking a fast horse, he [426] was forced to borrow from a wealthy patron, sometimes handing over as much as one-half the game killed or one-half the loot captured. To be sure, [555] the man who attained years of discretion and still possessed no horse must have been strikingly deficient in initiative or ability or both, but a poor boy, even when he was well endowed with these admirable qualities, might never become a man of substantial wealth or a leader in the community.

There is no doubt that, as Mr. Duvall claims, "poor young men have [555] gone on the warpath, captured horses, bought fine clothes, and medicine bundles and become leaders among the people,"[42] but they had to overcome many obstacles that the sons of rich men never had to face. These favored youths, who expected their fathers' poor followers to supply the household with the necessary food and skins, could participate more frequently in the rewarding war parties and win prestige while still comparatively young.[43] The sons of the very rich might even spurn this activity. Beautifully clothed, continually honored by their parents with expensive purchases of privilege, and assured of their bride price, these *minipoka*, or "children of plenty" as Uhlenbeck translates the term,[44] were urged to shun the warpath altogether. The exhortations of their fathers could not have differed much from [171] that of the Cree who said, "Here, my son, dress yourself. This is no way to be. I never bid you go to the scenes I need not name; I love you too much. Poor men are they who go on the warpath, (note well!) for they hope to steal horses; but you, your horse is handsome; he is fleet of foot. And you yourself are handsome; you are not poor. . . . "[45] Such advice was often [156] rejected[46] but some "dandies," contrary to the manly ideal asserted in their [181] society, were content to remain at home. J. H. Bradley observes, "Not in-

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father had sixty horses." At another time he observed that his father had "turned [556] over his whole herd of horses to me (about 100)" at the time of his marriage in 1905. This last figure is conventionally given to the question, "How many horses would [231] a rich man own?" (For corroboration, see Ewer, *Ibid.*). [175]

[41] Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

[42] Wissler, *Ceremonial Bundles*, p. 289. [114]

[43] Bernard Mishkin, *Rank and Warfare Among the Plains Indians*, p. 47.

[44] C. C. Uhlenbeck and R. H. van Gulik, *A Blackfoot-English Vocabulary*, p. 226.

[45] Leonard Bloomfield, *Cree Texts*, p. 63 ff.

[46] Most spectacularly by Owl Boy, the valiant son of Mountain Chief (S. Piegan). The Blood tell of no such hero. Wissler (*Social Life*, p. 30) claims that despite such urgings the young man always went on the warpath, but his own further statement would seem to belie this. (See text p. 8 and footnote 48.)

554 frequently . . . they [the young men] are great drones, lounging in the vil-
556 lage, participating neither in the war nor the chase. . . . "[47] Obviously, these
"drones" trusted to their fathers' wealth to bring them positions of re-
[157] spect—and this trust was not misplaced. Bravery and war deeds remained
[622] an asset to leadership, but among the Blackfoot, "great deeds in social and
ceremonial life would alone elevate one to the status of headman."[48]

556 Blackfoot society offered considerable opportunity for vertical mobility.
555 Disease, accidents of climate, misfortunes of gambling might reduce and, at
times, even wipe out large herds, but the mere fact that great numbers of
horses could be accumulated and held for a considerable period led to certain advantage. Manipulation through purchase, give-aways, and other forms of ostentatious display in no way destroyed this advantage. Shrewdly exercised, they built up great prestige and reliable support.[49]

Rivalry and Violence

578 Cooperative mechanisms, emphasizing interpersonal responsibilities both
182 within the family and within the larger social group (band and men's
621 societies) counteracted to some degree the competitive trends, but these
trends continued nevertheless to dominate Blackfoot life. Rivalry for
recognition and power was so keen that it "often led to assassination and
621 other dark deeds."[50] As early as 1808, Alexander Henry notes with consider-
578 able feeling the difficulties of the traders in dealing with the Blackfoot, but
181 he leaves no doubt that within the tribes, Blackfoot behavior was equally
[834] unpredictable and destructive to peaceful relations. Regarding the Piegan,
he wrote:

[837]
> They have frequent quarrels which may end in bloodshed or death; for though they are lavish in offering their women to the whites. . .they are exceedingly jealous among themselves. These quarrels, however, seldom last long, nor do they affect the whole tribe; the woman being killed, reconciliation is immediate and all are friends again.[51]

Other Blackfoot tribes were certainly no better:

> The Cold Band are notoriously a set of audacious villains. The Blood are still worse, always inclined to mischief and murder.[52]

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[47] Bradley, *Characteristics*, p. 272. Bradley commenced writing down his impressions in 1871 when he was stationed at frontier army posts, most particularly Fort Benton and Fort Shaw, and continued to do so until his death in 1877. (*Ibid.*, p. 7.)

[48] Wissler, *Social Life*, p. 23. It is possible that this was a development of the late buffalo period.

[49] *Idem.*

[50] *Idem.*

[51] Alexander Henry and David Thompson, *Journals*, Vol. 2, p. 722. Cf. also Maximilian, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

[52] Henry and Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 530.

657 realize how radically its programs altered the whole fabric of the older
177 society.

Certain tribes, such as the Teton Dakota or the Kiowa, once placed upon
657 a reserve seem to have been little disturbed either by accident or official
[171] design. The former enjoyed a continuing equality in an economy of scarcity;[74] the latter, a social hierarchy fixed by inherited horse wealth.[75] Com-
121 pared with these more or less static societies, the Blood offer an exceptional opportunity for analytic examination. Within a short sixty years of reserve life, economic change has been surprisingly frequent. Its influence on the structure of Blood society and the status of the individual in it, has been marked.

1877–1894

657 The Blood took the government rations but they did not accept the recommended way of life. The Treaty of 1877 provided farm land, necessary seeds and implements for any Indian ready to farm.[76] Those who preferred to herd received cattle: two cows were given to a family of five; three cows to a family of five to ten; and four cows to a family of more than ten. For those who wanted to till the soil and also raise stock, a compromise arrangement was arrived at.[77]

657 But oats, barley, potatoes, and spring wheat did not thrive on these
241 northern plains. The growing season was short, the frosts early, the hazards of drought and grasshoppers made the returns most uncertain. By 1884,
[311] 1500 Blood cultivated only 275 acres, and much of the labor was supplied by white farmers employed by the Government.[78]

657 Cattle herding fared no better. It, too, was far removed from the ad-
231 venturous and rewarding experience of the past. Except for a few desirable hunting strains, the breeding of horses had been a matter of accident—number not quality was important for most of the trading was done in unbroken animals. The onerous duties involved in caring for one, two, or three cows held little attraction. Increase was slow, and the Government
[556] frowned upon any change in ownership. The horse remained, as it had been for more than a century, the most desired possession of the Blood, their symbol of wealth, their medium of exchange.

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[74] Esther S. Goldfrank, *Historic Change and Social Character*, p. 81 ff.

[75] The Kiowa, like the Blood, were permitted to retain their unequally distributed horse herds. B. Mishkin, *Rank and Warfare*, p. 53, writes, "The rank held by Kiowa families at the end of the last century has become the fixed hereditary status of the descendants."

[76] 1878, Vol. 8, No. 10, p. xv ff.; also Appendix C, xxxiv ff.

[77] *Ibid.*, p. xlvi.

[78] 1884, Vol. 3, No. 4, p. iv.

The Blood not only failed to apply for their full allotment, they even 657
cared inadequately for those cattle issued them. In the winter of 1878, the 231
Government was forced to hire four men at a cost of $250 a month to look
after the Blackfoot herds.[79] The first winters on the reserve were harsh.[80]
Rations were insufficient. To ward off starvation, the Blood ate mice, dogs, [261]
even buffalo skins. The cattle were surreptitiously slaughtered. In a few
years, most of the animals issued under the Treaty of 1877 had disappeared. What remained in the herd of the Indian Department was cheerfully sold in 1884-5, removing "another source of expense and anxiety."[81]

It has frequently been said that these Indians of the Plains did not accept 657
the government programs because they were so wedded to their nomadic
life that they could not be persuaded to settle down and farm or look after
their cows. A review of the official reports makes their lack of cooperation [127]
patent; but it also lends reason to their attitude. Cultivation of recom- [241]
mended but climatically unsuitable plants was one long headache. Nor
could the milk of two cows, or their slow and uncertain increase, be ex- [234]
pected to induce a family that had depended upon the hunt to give up the [517]
few pleasures of their former nomadism that still remained to them—
visits to friends, rodeos, and the social compensations of the Sun Dance.
The Blood accepted relief while they clung tenaciously to whatever could [178]
be salvaged from their former life.

The rations issued by the Government assured equality to the Blood, but 231
on a meagre subsistence level. The outlawing of raiding, on the other hand, 657
froze the "horse wealth," and those who had horse herds in 1877 were able 556
to maintain them. In fact, barring accident, disease, or theft, these horse owners could expect a natural and, frequently, a substantial increase. This increase became the sole important source of accumulated wealth while initiative that had found expression in the old manner of life was blocked by poor rewards and legal prohibitions.

Mobility.—The uncertain balance of the pre-reserve days was thrown 657
further out of joint. The Canadian administration was now responsible for 556
tribal welfare, and a tribal leader's need to share his wealth to win loyal support was less urgent. The settled living, the small unproductive farms and few cattle made even a good worker a luxury. Only the rich man with

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[79] 1879, Vol. 6, No. 7, p. 67. The term Blackfoot is used here. It is not clear whether [101]
this is an inclusive term for all the tribes, or only for the North Blackfoot. The former seems more reasonable.

[80] W. J. Waines (*Problems of the Drought Area in Western Canada*, p. 206) writes, [132]
"Evidence suggests that during the period 1883-96 there were years in which the precipitation was as low as it has been since 1929, and that there was in addition considerable frost damage."

[81] 1884, Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 83.

657 large herds might still prefer a poor yet capable son-in-law. More often,
556 however, he tried to cement his position by marrying his daughter to the
[581] son of another rich man. Such marriages took place, for the most part, between children of ten or twelve years,[22] *minipoka* or "favorites." To enhance
[557] the status of the head of the family, these children were honored with special gifts and exempted from normal duties. Even as adults, they did not par-
[582] ticipate in the ordinary way in tribal life. The men continued to validate their position by generous giving, but the gifts they offered were more often derived from inheritance and the exploitation of brothers and sons-in-law than from their own labors. The girls grew up without learning to cook, and long after marriage expected their mothers to prepare their meals and carry them to their tipis.

556 581 586 [184] Parental desire to channel wealth permanently was, however, frequently frustrated. The early training of these young and favored children made for even greater marital instability than was customary for the tribe as a whole. It was usually the rich or the handsome (and the two were often identical) who were credited with many marriages. The poor, less sought after, stuck it out longer, if not through thick and thin.

581 184 The following is a description of the marriage of two favorites. Thirty-five years later, the informant spoke of this short interlude with deepest pain. Like a hurt child he reviewed the hardships of these months of living together.

> 581 184 585 Yellow Wolf, my father, said to me, "Now don't fool around with anybody for you are a *minipoka*, and you should have a proper marriage." A marriage was arranged for me and Wakes at Night, the daughter of White Buffalo Robe, Chief of the Lone-Fighters Band. She was a *minipoka* too, and only fourteen years old. She brought blankets and about fifteen pair of moccasins, enough for all the members of my family. She brought a pair for me. She also brought two broken and six unbroken horses. Yellow Wolf and his relatives put up twenty-five horses, their best ones. When this gift was sent to White Buffalo Robe, my father-in-law, Wakes at Night rode in front on a fine saddle horse. She wore a weasel-tail suit and a headdress. A wagon was loaded with blankets and goods. They were all taken over to White Buffalo Robe. White Buffalo Rib, a brother of Wakes at Night, received some of the horses. . . .
>
> 581 184 Wakes at Night was the second child, but like her older brother, she was also a *minipoka*. Our marriage was not a happy one. She did not treat me very well. We fought constantly about where we should live. White Buffalo Robe wanted me to live at his place, because his daughter was so young and got homesick. My father did not want to let me go—and besides I wanted to stay home with him. Whenever White Buffalo Robe thought I had done something wrong, he took his daughter home. This happened several times. I would send my father for her and get her back. When I took my wife to visit her parents, her father would keep us there for a longer time

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[22] A. E. Hudson, *Kazak Social Structure*, p. 35, notes a similar tendency of the rich to marry early.

than we had intended to stay, and my father, knowing what would happen when we 581
went away, would make it hard for us to go. 184

It is not surprising that a marriage of this kind, with the children ma-
neuvering to remain in their respective privileged homes, and the fathers 586
maneuvering for even the limited *minipoka* help, did not last long. This one 184
broke up in a year and a half.

When the favorites remarried, pomp, ceremony and property exchange 587
were usually omitted, as they were in second marriages throughout the 184
tribe. Free from the pressure of parents, a man might select a wife from any
stratum of society. Passion rather than property dictated the new choice.

The growing concentration of horse wealth made an unstable marriage 556
situation even more precarious. Young men had great difficulty in obtaining 581
a wife at all, for they could neither pay for nor support one. Such difficulty [162]
was not unknown in the older Blood society despite the excess of women
over men. The established hunters and warriors (i.e., men who had horses [595]
or their equivalent in ceremonial prestige) had two, three, or more wives.[83]
Fathers urged their young and attractive daughters, then as now, upon
older and successful men. But while the time of marriage was late (many [582]
men were twenty-five and the sons of the poor frequently over thirty)[84] [555]
a young man still had some chance to rise on his own initiative and win
recognition. In the early eighties, and for twenty years to follow, he suffered
from all the old disadvantages of the polygamous society, and the new order
offered him few satisfactory ways of exhibiting his worth. In 1882, it was [674]
reported, "there was very little crime. More trouble was caused by the [578]
stealing of women from each other. Women sold for horses. Only a few are
rich enough to buy women now. Most of the young men who have no horses
cannot get married, and therefore steal from someone rich in women."[85]

Nevertheless, a few ways remained for making a living. A man might 556
work out for whites or become a scout or farmer in the government service,
or if he preferred to follow Indian custom, he could seek a vision and become [464]
a shaman, although remunerative practice did not immediately follow. Or [557]
he might, and here the rewards were quicker, improve his position by marry-
ing a rich women, often some ten or fifteen years his senior. A sufficiently
ambitious man might combine all of them. John Many Rattles did.[86] Born 556
in 1862, he reached adulthood when it was most difficult for young men to 557
rise. He hired out to whites, became a government scout at thirty-three, [464]

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[83] Henry and Thompson, *Journals*, Vol. 2, p. 526, "Many of them have six or seven wives."

[84] Lewis, *The Effect of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture*, p. 40. Cf. also Bradley, *Characteristics*, p. 272.

[85] 1883, Vol. 4, No. 5, p. 176.

[86] Harry D. Biele, Field Notes, 1939.

[1877-1894]

556 bided his time in marriage and told his friend, Flesh Taster, that "he was
557 looking for someone suitable to him, even though she might be older."
[464] Finally he sought a vision and acquired medicine power. What money he
earned he put into horses and proceeded to validate his prestige in the tra-
[454] ditional way. He bought bundles "with the idea of being a priest some day."
[432] He had observed how comfortable a living "bishops" made, and he aspired
to become one. Today he earns about $300 as a Horn priest and $600 as a
[465] medicine doctor, "more when there is an epidemic."

464 But the opportunities for remunerative work were scarce and few young
men had either Many Rattles' ambition or foresight. Farming and what
556 little herding there was may have raised the subsistence level, but they
brought no substantial increase in income. The young man's position became increasingly insecure. It was difficult to get a job, it was difficult to get a wife, it was difficult to get a horse, and the prestige and advantage that followed the buying of ceremonial objects was therefore denied him.
[685] To find a place in the new society he had to revert to the patterns of the
past, even when they were forbidden. The 1887–1888 report states, "War parties [were] composed mostly of young men from 16–25 years of age . . ."[87] These were raids upon the neighboring herds, and usually the Government cut short a brave career with a jail sentence.

554 The chasm between rich and poor was widening. When an old medicine
556 man was asked, "Who is *istuisanaps?* Who gets respect?" he answered,
[461] "Those people who are born of rich people and maintain their riches. Also
those rich in prestige from bundles and war exploits," and finally he added, "a rich man must have acquired his riches through earnest, honest, hard labor."[88] For today as well as yesterday "respect" is usually phrased in terms of war exploits and ceremonial ownership. It is therefore most revealing that this medicine man who spent his young days bucking the concentration of horse wealth in the first years of the reserve period, should feel his early struggle so intensely that only secondarily does he define "respect" in the traditional manner. His final remarks are perhaps an apology for the "new" rich who do not buy ceremonial objects but receive covert
[178] "respect" from the group. Earnest, honest, hard labor was not rewarded in
a distant past.[89] Skill, daring, and ambition were more apt to have brought success.

184 CHILD STATUS AND WEALTH.—Children of the rich were set apart from
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[87] 1888, Vol. 13, No. 15, p. 108. The report adds "Red Crow and the older men and chiefs strongly object to this horse stealing." In this, they followed a pattern at least as old as 1809. "The old men," reads the Journal of Henry and Thompson, p. 546, "redoubled their exertions to keep the young ones in order."

[88] Biele, Field Notes.

[89] Mishkin, *op. cit.*, p. 53, for a similar rephrasing.

[1877-1894]

children of the poor. At birth, the son of a rich man was placed upon an 184
otter or a weasel skin. The poor man's child had to be content with a buck- 556
skin bag. Pointed Plume was initiated to many ceremonial objects for which
large and handsome payments were made. The list is impressive: forelock [844]
of the Long Time Pipe; weasel-tail suit, a partnership in the Horn Society [432]
when he was only fourteen years old, and many ceremonial paintings to [852]
insure long life and prosperity. He was rarely permitted to leave his home
and was never entrusted to any white school. [857]

Ned Sloane, the son of a white father and an Indian mother who died 736
when he was born, could boast of no such honorings. Deserted by his one
remaining parent, the boy spent his childhood in the care of his Indian 184
grandmother, visiting from relative to relative. "All of them treated me
like a son," he said, but none gave him any substantial gift—not even his
famous uncle Long Tail-feathers, owner of many powers, though Ned and
his grandmother shared his home for years. At the tender age of seven, the [874]
youngster was sent to the Dunbow Industrial School, more than a hundred
miles from the reserve. In the eleven years he "studied" there, he had four
visitors.

Each member of a men's society hailed his fellow-member as *taka*, 575
a term of friendship that frequently implied a greater degree of affec- [572]
tion and loyalty than was lavished upon a close relative. Even after the
buffalo had disappeared and the hunt was a thing of the past, these societies [178]
persisted; they still remain a great force for solidarity among the Blood. [182]
But within their membership social differences are clearly recognized. It
was the rich men's sons who became the leaders because they could buy the [556]
more expensive bundles.[30]

Long before they were eligible for membership in such organizations, 857
young children were well aware of age differences. Very consciously, they
sought their playmates within a limited group. But even within this group, [561]
the children of the rich formed an inner clique which set them off as a [556]
snobbish elite and at the same time protected them from the envious as-
saults of their less fortunate comrades; not unexpectedly they chose their [184]
taka or special friend from their own social stratum. Pointed Plume says, [572]

> I had a number of boy playmates. They were *minipoka* like me. Buffalo Horn was my special comrade, but Wolf Tail and Painted Arrow were also close friends.
>
> Buffalo Horn, like me, was a *minipoka* and the only boy in the family. It was much easier to play with another *minipoka*, for when we were teased by the gang, I and Buffalo Horn could stick together. Also my family felt that Buffalo Horn was a fit companion for me. He came of a wealthy family and was a favorite son.

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[30] Maximilian, *Travels in the Interior of North America*, p. 256, for the buffalo period.

[1877-1894]

857 571 [561] In the children's play camp, however, age-grades were frequently forgotten and boys and girls imitated the life of adults. Some chose to be husband and wife, others mother and child. Pointed Plume says,

> Usually we had partners, but my older sister almost always played with me. I was her son. She thought it safest if she took care of me, because I was a *minipoka*.

[184] No such supervision was given a Ned Sloane. He frankly tells of his sex play with a little girl of five.

[556] The poorer children served the rich children much as the poorer adults served the rich adults. Sometimes this was a matter of free choice, a desire to be identified with a more fortunate child. Pointed Plume says,

> Bird Shooter was not a *minipoka* but he liked to play with the favorite children. His father was related to my father. He had just enough money to keep going. Bird Shooter was a little younger than I. He used to stand at the stick and call the winner in the arrow game.

The service of others, however, was bought and paid for. Pointed Plume says,

> [431] One of our favorite pastimes was making horses out of mud. Neither I nor Buffalo Horn was particularly good at this and we tried to induce Big Bonnet, who was poor but a good sculptor, to play with us and make horses for us. At first he didn't care to, but I finally persuaded him to come to my house. My father gave him moccasins and and pair of pants and my mother fed him well, so he remained with us. He and I were the same age, about ten.

And this service was exacted once it had been bought. Pointed Plume says,

> [431] Big Bonnet used to play the arrow game with us. Arguments would arise as to who was the winner. Big Bonnet wanted his arrows back and would fight the others. If I and Buffalo Horn beat him up he would go home, but he had to come back the next day to play because he was paid for.

Poor boys tried to get even. Ned Sloane says,

> [578] When I was six, there was a favorite child who lived in our band and who wore a weasel skin charm which hung down his back. One day, one of the older boys grabbed the weasel skin and twisted it so that the cord almost choked the *minipoka*. He finally freed himself and went crying to his father. The gang broke up quickly. They were afraid when the father of the boy screamed at them the worst curse known to the Blood, "May you have an early death!"

657 178 SUMMARY.—These first seventeen years on the reservation saw the greatest change in Blood society since the introduction of the horse. A people who had been nomadic, subsisted on buffalo, and raided their neighbors, both white and Indian, for horses that alone brought prestige and the possibility of social advance—these people were now settled within the

confines of a limited area, asked to follow unrewarding and unfamiliar 657
occupations, and forbidden the one activity that assured them a place in 178
their society—horse-stealing. That such a radical change was accomplished
without resistance was due to one fact: there were no more buffalo on these [136]
once blackened plains. Rations offered by a friendly though foreign government
alone made life possible.

Much of the traditional living was destroyed. But the economic mechanisms 657
developed in the buffalo period survived. Unlike the rebellious Sioux, 556
the acquiescent Blood were permitted to retain their horses. To this starving 178
people these horses remained the symbol of wealth. Exuberant property
transfers for ceremonial privilege and prestige continued to dominate their [425]
life but, lacking the earlier opportunities for improving status, only those [184]
who had horses before 1877 were able to participate in ostentatious displays.
The need for loyal supporters diminished. So did the need for an
energetic, though poor, son-in-law. The rich preferred to bulwark their [557]
position by marrying their children to others equally favored. Social stratifications,
incipient in the buffalo days, became more marked in these early
years of the reserve period.

1894–1910

The new economy continued to be a desultory affair. By 1896, the population 657
had fallen to 1400.[91] The Blood were farming 304 acres, an increase 433
of only twenty-nine in ten years. The farms were small, but the agent
proudly reported that "instead of 35 fields worked mostly by whites in 241
1886, there were now 84 fields worked mostly by Indians."[92] Still the old [162]
difficulties remained and new ones were added. "The depression and lack of
need of Indian labor and commodities, the poor crops in the Northwest [464]
Territories made it necessary to continue relief without curtailment, in spite
of increasing vigilance."[93]

The earnings for the year, although greater than they had ever been before 434
and distributed to more individuals, fell far below the needs of the 463
tribe:[94] 657

Mining coal	$380.00
Hauling coal	725.00
Freighting	1183.69
Hay sold	1400.00
Working wages	2000.00
Sundries	1821.42
Total	$7510.11

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[91] 1896, Vol. 10, No. 14, p. 367.

[92] *Ibid.*, pp. 75, 326.

[93] *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

[94] *Ibid.*, p. 276.

657 231 425 **Success of Cattle-raising.**—Since the land seemed so inhospitable to farming yet so desirable for herding, the Canadian Indian Department made another attempt to introduce cattle-breeding on the various Blackfoot reserves. In 1894, three of the most influential men of the Blood, Red Crow, the old tribal chief who had concluded the Treaty of 1877, Cropeared Wolf, his adopted son, and Sleeps on Top, were permitted to exchange their ponies for "bulls, cows, heifers and calves." Twenty-three were issued to the first two, and Sleeps on Top received eighteen.[35]

[178] Time and the inevitability of a settled life upon the reserve may have made the Blood readier to accept the responsibility of herding now than in the past, but the main reasons for the success of this program must be looked for elsewhere. Only a few of their hundreds of animals were of real use for farming, transportation and riding. On the other hand, the Blood had seen the success of a similar program among the neighboring Piegan. The rich herders knew that an exchange of twenty for twenty would bring quick benefits and would not radically reduce their manipulative horse [556] wealth. There was a great clamor for cattle; but the man without horses remained the man without cows.

657 231 The following is a list taken from the official record of some who applied for cattle at this time:[36]

> 425 511 Red Crow (chief): . . .House in good condition, comfortably furnished. . .a nice lot of poultry, a large band of horses and about 25 head of cattle. . . .The house had a carpeted floor. . .and there was a good sewing machine. The chief would like to exchange some ponies for some heifers.
>
> Iron (son of Chief Moon): Neat house. No cattle. Large band of horses, good stable, implements, shed, hay corral, cattle shed to be built, logs for which were on the ground. . . .Was anxious to exchange horses for cattle.
>
> To-morrow: Good house. . .stoves, two beds, outside kitchen, building new stable. . .root house, corral, large band of horses, logs on ground for cattle shed, and wants to get cattle.
>
> Running Crane: House was in its usual good shape, bedsteads, rocking chairs, washstands, red table-cloth on table, fancy stand-up, clock, coal and cook stoves, carpet on floor. . .cattle shed in hollow. . . anxious to get cattle.
>
> Big Snake: a similar place, wants cattle also.
>
> Black Plume: a similar place, also wants to get cattle.

657 231 425 Others who had well-kept houses are mentioned, but no demands for cattle are registered. It may easily be inferred that although these Indians

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[35] *Ibid.*, p. 272 ff.

[36] *Idem.*

were cooperating admirably in the new way of life, they had no horses to 231
exchange. And interestingly enough, at the very time cattle were being 657
issued to the rich in exchange for their horses, some of the younger men, cut 425
off from the new wealth, as they had been from the old, again "committed
depredations on the ranchers' cattle."[97] Raiding which was a necessary and [556]
legitimate road to wealth in the buffalo days, still seemed necessary in [685]
1895, but it was no longer legitimate.

From the point of view of the reserve (and those who had horses) the program was a great success.

> The first 50 head of heifers issued to the Indians last summer have done well and the Indians took great care of them all winter. The cattle were never stabled, but kept in good sheds and corrals carefully made and well sheltered in the brush, the increase for the first year being thirty head. The other Indians have shown great anxiety to get cattle and a large number have been applied for. During the present year I have traded over one hundred head of cattle to different Indians for ponies and still the supply is not equal to the demand. This owning of cattle I consider the first great step these Indians have yet taken to make themselves self-supporting, their reserve being one of the best grazing parts in Southern Alberta, and capable of feeding a great many thousands of cattle.[98]

By 1897, "profits having rapidly accrued to these few, the desire to follow their example became so great that the department could not, with the means at its disposal, meet the demands upon it."[99] In the first year, 50 heifers had been issued; in the second, 100 more; and at the end of two years, these had increased to 291 head.[100]

The first decade of the 1900's saw not only a great increase in herds, but 231
in cash income from both horses and cattle. In 1898, the Deputy General of 657
Indian Affairs had reported, "A market has sprung up in a most unexpected 434
direction, purchases of these ponies having been made for the purpose of
packing freight through the Klondike."[101] This market continued, and in
1902 we read, "A great demand has sprung up for Indian ponies and I am [432]
pleased to see the Indians taking advantage of this and selling. Over 400
head must have been sold during the season."[102] That same year the slaughtered cattle netted their owners $4180.[103]

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[97] *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

[98] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

[99] 1897, Vol. 11, No. 14, p. xxi.

[100] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[101] 1898, Vol. 11, No. 14, p. xxi.

[102] 1902, Vol. 11, No. 27, Pt. 1, p. 133.

[103] *Idem.*

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

434 The total income of the tribe had risen to $29,000.[104] Of this amount,
one-half was derived from farm products including hay. The two were, in
311 fact, almost synonymous, for only 51½ acres were still being cultivated.[105]
The erratic subsistence farming was rapidly abandoned and the whole
[463] tribe turned to providing fodder for the new herds: "Almost the only occupations
beside looking after the cattle and horses are hay making and
freighting coal."[106]

246 Many factors encouraged the Blood to join in the haying experiment.
657 First, a market existed both on and off the reservation: what the Indian
herds did not need was sold to the Mounted Police or neighboring white
[434] ranchers. Second, there was no onerous cultivation. Except for a few irrigated
acres, the hay that was cropped grew wild on the prairies. And finally,
in a new setting, the haying camps recalled the great days of their hunting
[464] past. In the late summer, the tribe again made for the open range. Any man
who owned a wagon, a team of horses, and a few implements, could be sure
of some income from the new industry. Those who lacked even these few
basic necessities could attach themselves to wealtheir men. As in the earlier
time, their labor would be rewarded by some small share in the harvest.
[556] Advantage still remained with the men of wealth, but participation was
[184] assured at a low level, and even the poor man had a chance.

The camps also strengthened, if only temporarily, bonds of family and
[571] band. The notorious Charcoal,[107] who had left his home in anger and moved
[621] far off by himself, joined the haying camp, again accepted the leadership
[593] of his brother and helped bring in the crop. Desire to share in the new wealth
[182] overcame violent intra-familial resentment.

In 1902, one-third of the adult males on the reserve owned cattle.[108]
464 By 1909, practically every man could boast a cow. Numerous circumstances
[231] contributed to the more equitable distribution of wealth during the first
decade of the century. Such industries as haying, hauling, or working in the
[434] beet factory were open to everyone. In 1905, beet fields were planted at
Raymond,[109] and two years later the Blood earned $9000 topping beets and
[316] carting them to the factory.[110] And the report continues, "One of our
Indians named Black Horse has a small coal mine on the banks of the St.
[472] Mary's River from which he makes his living mining and selling coal to the

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[104] *Ibid.*, Pt. 2, p. 228.

[105] *Ibid.*, Pt. 2, p. 220.

[106] *Ibid.*, Pt. 1, p. 132.

[107] Charcoal later murdered his wife's lover. He killed himself as he was about to be apprehended by the Agency police assisted by his own brothers.

[108] 1904, Vol. 11, No. 27, p. 237.

[109] 1905, Vol. 11, No. 27, p. 203.

[110] 1907-1908, Vol. 14, No. 27, p. 161.

[1894-1910]

schools and settlers in the neighborhood."[111] His lucrative venture added to 464
the general income: anyone so minded could haul coal at a fixed rate. [316]

But the chief concern of the Blood was with their herds. In 1902, a loan [472]
system had been established.[112] "The system," explains a report, "is the
lending to the Indians of one or two animals upon condition that, at the 231
expiration of a certain time he will return to the department an equal 657
number,—these in turn being loaned to others." Any increase above that 426
number was his. And in 1905, the Blood demanded the 900 head of cattle
still due under the old treaty of 1877. Having once refused them, "these [425]
men seeing the advance made by cattle herders . . . changed their minds."[113]

By 1906, the Blood had more than 7500 cattle,[114] and a cash income of 434

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[178]

[111] *Ibid.* Among the Northern Blackfoot the mines are tribally owned and the
benefits general. In fact, in contradistinction to the Blood, much of the experience 184
of this tribe in the reserve period has tended to equalize wealth. Among other things, [316]
the cold winters of 1905-6 and 1906-7 affected the Northern Blackfoot much more
seriously than they did the Blood and more of their cattle were lost. This no doubt [655]
inspired a more general North Blackfoot participation in agriculture both before
1910 and after. The cold winters of 1919 and 1920, therefore, did not create as inequitable a situation for them as they did for the Blood.

But perhaps even more fundamental to the general security of the North Black- 184
foot was their income from annuities and land rentals that became substantial 434
something over twenty years ago. These neatly cushioned the shock from any drop
in market price. In 1923, they reached a combined total of more than $88,000 (for
the Blood approximately $22,000); in 1934, during the great depression and drought,
the North Blackfoot had an income of almost $125,000 from these same sources
(the Blood something over $13,000). The last published figures (for 1936) vary little
from these. A census taken in 1939 reveals a North Blackfoot population of 830; 162
a Blood population of 1476.

According to Dr. Jane Richardson and Dr. Lucien M. Hanks, Jr. (personal com- 434
munications) everyone on the North Blackfoot Reserve under fifty years of age
receives $25 annually, over fifty years, $50. Besides liberal grocery rations, 7 lbs. of 184
meat are allotted weekly to each individual. The sick and aged receive additional
help. At marriage a young couple is set up in a newly built or adequately refurbished
house, given furniture, a horse and wagon if desired, and what is more important,
forty acres of the best cultivatable land still available. An informant told Dr. Rich-
ardson, "There are no more poor on this reserve." Another, somewhat nostalgic for [556]
the privileges of the past, said, "It isn't fun being a *minipoka* on this reserve any
more." While there is still considerable wife-beating and a rare case of wife-murder, [674]
Dr. Richardson says there is little violence exhibited between males. Evidently,
the practical elimination of wealth differences has effectively reduced the strains [182]
of competition, and as a corollary, the incidence of assault among them.

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[112] 1902, Vol. 11, No. 27, p. 132.

[113] 1905, Vol. 11, No. 27, p. 202.

[114] 1907-1908, Vol. 14, No. 27, p. 162. This peak was not maintained. The cold 434
winter that followed reduced the herds almost one-third (among the Piegan and the 231
North Blackfoot the loss was even higher). Fifty-five hundred cattle survived and 178
no great dislocation of ownership seems to have resulted.

434 approximately $40,000 annually.[115] As early as 1902, the agent had written,
178 “these Indians are certainly industrious and never lose an opportunity to
make money at any work that may turn up.”[116] And four years later the
[461] general report reads, “A complete change has gradually come over their
views. . . . The experimental discovery of the market value has brought
this revolution of feeling.”[117] Completely forgotten was the fact that the
market value had been equally important to a successful fur trade in the
buffalo days, and that then it had also been a spur to industry and ambition.

311 SOCIAL VALUES SUSTAINED.—But neither the increase in wealth nor its
231 greater spread threatened the dominance of the large horse owners. True,
184 they were persuaded, at long last, to care for the meat needs of their families
from their own stock,[118] but the small dent made by these contributions
556 was quickly offset by other government policies. The flow of white settlers
into the area was steady, and it soon became apparent that “further expansion
need not in the future be looked for so much in the direction of the
increase of herds already in the hands of individuals as in the number of
those who will engage in the industry, because largely in consequence of the
curtailment of the hay areas . . . and the gradual increase of cattle, a large
and growing proportion of Indians have already reached the limit of what
they could profitably handle. . . . ”[119] Ponies and priority had determined
the size and ownership of the large cattle herds.

464 Many a young man who could not acquire a substantial herd of his own
231 was drawn into the industry as a helper. His position in terms of the old
buffalo days was in part reëstablished. Again his services were in demand;
[465] again he was assured board, lodging, clothing, and if his employer were
[557] generous, a horse as an annual bonus. These helpers were often the younger
or poorer relatives of rich herders,[120] and they hoped for preferential treatment
because of relationship. There was little chance of riches in this work,

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[115] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

[116] 1902, Vol. 11, No. 27, p. 133.

[117] 1906, Vol. 12, No. 27, p. xxv.

[511] [118] In 1905, twenty-five men agreed to support seventy-five women and children.
They handed back the $50 that had been credited to their meat account. (1905, Vol.
11, No. 27, p. 202.) By 1907–1908, two hundred Blood, or about two-thirds of the
[657] adult male population, found it unnecessary to draw free food allowances. In that
year the Government supplied the tribe with 273,000 lbs. less beef than it had five
years earlier. (1907–1908, Vol. 14, No. 27, p. 163.)

[119] 1907–1908, Vol. 14, No. 27, p. xxvi.

[171] [120] A more or less similar situation exists among the Kazak. In discussing the
helpers of cattle owners, A. E. Hudson (*Kazak Social Structure*, p. 27) writes, “These,
according to my informants, were of two kinds: first, poor relatives of the cattle
owner, members of his own uru, who worked for him without pay and toward whom
he stood in a patriarchal relation as their patron and protector; and second, hired
workers of another uru who receive wages.”

but despite the unattractiveness of the wage, some of the ambitious still 464
sought these jobs. Loyal service might be rewarded by a convenient 231
marriage.

Although the poor man might raise his status by marrying the daughter of [557]
his rich employer, there were many times when he complained of continued 556
exploitation after such a marriage. "Respect" did not always follow. Certain 557
brave souls broke from the trying situation, but many knew that, if
you were born poor, the ways and means of getting ahead fast were still
few.

Squirrel Man, Yellow Wolf's poor son-in-law, stuck it out. His behavior 556
bespeaks his frustrations. A year after marriage, the young groom brought 557
his bride to her father's place. Here they were given a home of their own, 156
"for Squirrel Man had nothing except what he got from his father-in-law 606
for whom he worked from that time on." He sat in the Sun Lodge which 607
his "chaste" wife put up, but it was her brother, Pointed Plume, who paid
most of the expenses, made the large distributions at the give-away, and
gained in prestige. Later, when Squirrel Man's sons wanted to farm, they
had to borrow horses and wagons from their wealthy uncle. In time, "although
he always acted like a brother to Pointed Plume," as one informant
put it, the unhappy husband could tolerate his lot no longer. He feigned [202]
suicide when his wife persisted in visiting her brother; he flashed a mirror
from the hill-top (a conventional invitation to assignation) in an attempt
to bolster his ego and make his wife jealous—but in his case there was no
eager mistress to answer it; he abandoned his wife and home, only to return
meekly a short time later led by the agent; and as a final symbol of his
castration, he hastily donned woman's clothes and hid when he was called
by the court as a witness.[121]

Other young men preferred to work for the agency or white ranchers, for 464
the money wages received from such employment offered a greater measure
of independence. The poor young man no longer had to accept a patronizing
handout from a rich relative; he no longer had to be a burden to a poor
one. But despite the new opportunities, the economic advantage at marriage 556
would still favor the sons of the rich. The poor young man might have 184
secured some few cattle from a late issue; he might have bought a saddle
horse for $100 and a fine saddle for $105; he might even have invested in [435]
a few horses, as indeed Ned Sloane did after years of working out. But all [454]
[425]

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[121] Here and in the case of the man who wanted to murder his wife because he 276
believed she was sleeping with a ghost (see p. 51), abnormal behavior was laid to the 828
eating of peyote. This is particularly interesting since peyote is rarely used by the
Blackfoot. Squirrel Man got it from a visiting medicine man—one informant said
he was a Crow, another an Osage—who put on a peyote cure for Mrs. Squirrel Man.
The other secured the buttons while he was visiting the Crow.

[1894-1910]

556 this was as nothing compared with a Pointed Plume's equipment. "When I
184 was married in 1905," said he, "my father turned over his whole herd of
425 horses (about 100) to me. A few others had been given to me previously as gifts. My father told me that if I took care of the cattle I would get my share, and in 1916, he gave me twenty-five head . . . the next year my father gave me another twenty-five." It is not surprising that this favorite son was reluctant to leave his rich father and a secure and indulgent home for a few dollars in wages.

556 All in all, it was still the owners of the large herds who benefited most
184 from the growing cash income. They plowed back a considerable por-
[454] tion of it into better homes, better barns, better furnishings and better fences, as the Government urged them to do. Yet a goodly amount of cash was still available to them. This the inspector reported was "squandered in
[432] riotous living." Schooled in the old Blackfoot tradition of "generosity,"
[181] these Indians felt that added prestige could only accrue from conspicuous spending. The same group that had made fine payments for pipes, bundles, and memberships with their surplus horses, were now able to stage bigger and better feasts and give away valuable goods, such as cloth, blankets, shawls, in quantities unknown for many years.

431 Gifts flowed freely, but the circle within which they flowed remained, as
556 before, narrow and selected. The rich gave to the rich, to their close rela-
184 tives, or to those to whom they were under obligation for some past favor.
[585] For example: Yellow Wolf chose his son's best friend, the *minipoka*, Buffalo Horn, to be the husband of his brother's daughter. Pointed Plume said, "At the time of the marriage, I gave Buffalo Horn his weasel tail suit and a bonnet for a present." And then he added, "Later Buffalo Horn gave me a similar outfit." To the goodly gift of ten horses contributed to the bride price by his brother, Yellow Wolf added another five. All went to the rich father of Buffalo Horn. When Pointed Plume married the favorite daughter of White Buffalo Robe, Chief of the Lone-Fighter's Band, Yellow Wolf
[764] gave the already wealthy leader twenty-five horses. At a funeral feast given for Round Chief by his adopted son, Big Head and his nephew, Pointed Plume, the latter gave away two horses—one to Black Bear, his maternal uncle whom his father Yellow Wolf had superseded for the chieftaincy, the other to Split Arrow, the father of Dancing Bird who was his
[575] wife at this time. He said, "When Round Chief joined the Horn Society, he took me in as his partner. I was about fourteen at the time. This shows how close we were." It also shows why he participated so actively in the death feast.

431 Ned Sloane paid three horses as a bride price to his father-in-law, Charg-
556 ing Buffalo, who distributed them as follows: one horse was given to
585 Charging Buffalo's brother-in-law who had previously made a gift of a
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horse to the bride; one horse was given to Wooden Ears who had been 431
Charging Buffalo's partner in the Horn Society, and who, if one can trust 556
custom, had made an appropriate gift because of that relationship; and the 585
finest saddle horse was handed over to John Bruce in exchange for a nice 425
large house that Charging Buffalo wished to occupy.

The more general society give-aways made demands particularly on the 556
rich, but these demands were rarely resented. Irregular, and usually not 431
onerous, they enhanced the prestige of the giver. In no way did they raise
the status of those who received. Requests for special objects could, it is 154
true, only be denied with loss of face, but no Blood would hesitate to cir- [558]
cumvent expectation by resorting to the simple device of "shaming,"
well known long before the reserve period.[122] One example will suffice. In [156]
1905 Mountain Pine led a fine buckskin horse to the corral. Crow Chief
admired the animal saying, "I wish I owned that horse." Mountain Pine [522]
answered, "You can have it if you face to the east and cry 'Mama, I wish I owned such a horse.'" He then handed over the horse while the bystanders laughed heartily. It is not surprising that under these circumstances, Crow-Chief refused to accept it.[123]

Relationships within the age-grade societies were still a matter of group 575
concern, and great efforts were made by the wealthier members to be 556
"brotherly" and back up the poor. The methods employed were frequently 577
devious. When Ghost Moon brazenly demanded a new saddle from Moose [431]
Dung, a poor member of Middle Bear's society, the latter felt impelled to satisfy the request to save his *taka's* face, without, however, benefiting him more directly.[124]

In these years of economic expansion, old ways of spending were exag- 556
gerated. Favorites were showered with expensive gifts and raiment. A saddle 184
costing $80–$100, silver spurs, special boots, finely beaded blankets, all
might be lavished on a small and favored son. He was initiated to many [435]
ceremonial objects for which large payments were made not only in horses, [552]
but in fine goods. As the herds grew these payments became more ostentatious. The Long Time Pipe alone sold several times for 100 horses.

Nor was it enough for a prosperous Blood to have one favorite. Many had two or more. Pointed Plume said he wanted to "treat his two boys alike." Others frankly stated they wanted to show how rich they were. To all it gave great satisfaction to add to prestige by conspicuous spending.

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[122] There are many ways in which shaming could be used to emphasize wealth differences. For instance, at a formal smoke where bundles were named and prices given, "Those having a long list were cheered, while those having a short one were ridiculed." (Wissler, *Ceremonial Bundles*, p. 276).

[123] Biele, Field Notes.

[124] *Ibid.*

556 The less successful families aped their wealthier neighbors. They too had
184 give-aways, but these were on a lesser scale. They were initiated to a part of
a bundle; they bought the cheaper society memberships; they too had their
[852] favorites, but these children had to be content with small honorings. They
might receive an otter skin, even a weasel-tail suit, or they might wear
their umbilical cords in little beaded bags as the "real" favorites did. But
these meagre efforts of their parents to "keep up with the Jones's," never
succeeded in gaining recognition for their children. Only when the spending
was great and continual was a child considered a "real" favorite by the
Blood. A Bird Shooter or a Joe Duck-Bill might say, "I was a *minipoka*,
but my father died when I was still young. That is why I haven't many
honorings." At these avowals the Blood would only laugh; they knew
what it took to make a favorite.

787 Shamanism began to lose its hold. Wissler, writing at this time, says of
756 the vision quest, "The majority of young men fail in this ordeal as an
178 unreasonable fear usually comes down upon them the first night, causing
them to abandon their part."[125] Whatever may have been the trials of the
[151] ordeal it was not waning courage alone that turned the interest of the young
men from the vision quest and medicine power. There were now more
rewarding ways of earning a living.

Even the older men showed little interest in the quest itself, although
they still sought the benefits of supernatural power. Says Wissler, "Men of
medicine experience seldom resort to these tortures, as dreams of a
satisfactory character are said to come to them in normal sleep,"[126] and in
[425] another passage, he adds, "At present the majority of men seems content
to secure their charms and other medicines from those who do have dreams
[556] or from the large stock of such available for transfer."[127] Emphasis on
courage and inspiration disappeared; increasingly wealth was the preferred
road to power.

511 SUMMARY.—In this period of 1894–1910, the bulk of the wealth still
556 rested in the hands of the horse-owners who in the first seventeen years of
657 the reserve succeeded in freezing the only valuable form of property that
433 remained to the Blood after the treaty of 1877. The loan system, the final
distribution of cattle, the need for fodder and additional help, as well as
182 those industries that paid money wages, spread the wealth. With the
increased oppportunities for making a living, social differences became less
conspicuous, but the dominance of the large horse and cattle owners was
never threatened. As the economy expanded, the rich spent more lavishly,

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[125] Wissler, *Ceremonial Bundles*, p. 104.

[126] *Idem.*

[127] *Idem.*

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

[1894-1910]

and those who shared in the new wealth imitated as successfully as they 511
could the behavior of the wealthy tribesmen. The new herding economy 556
functioned comfortably within the framework of pre-reserve values. 657
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1910–1920

FARMING AND THE NEW MONEY ECONOMY.—After the turn of the century, 657
experiment revealed that the soil and climate of the Blood Reserve 311
were well adapted to the cultivation of red fife, an early maturing wheat,[128] [242]
and shortly before 1910, land was thrown open for farming. The cattle
herders, led by their head chief, Crop-eared Wolf, objected vociferously to
any reduction of their grazing fields,[129] but the agency, interested primarily
in obtaining the largest income possible, was not deterred. The younger men, [425]
"the working element" as the report calls them, eagerly backed the new
plan and rushed in their applications for land, "as much as a steam plough [464]
can break in two years."[130] This "working element" saw its first big chance
to make good since the buffalo days.[131] It was a composite of half-breeds [184]
who shared in a small way, if at all, in the property distributions of their
Blood relatives, a number of full-bloods whose families could offer them
little, and a few ambitious and far-sighted cattle owners, mostly from those
very chiefly families that had, at first, fought the program so bitterly.
The bulk of the herders, however, were content with their lucrative herds
and their share in the income from hay. Their poorer but not too distant
relatives preferred helping them to embarking upon a new and untried
career.

Previous wealth was no prerequisite to this new farming program. Anyone 657
willing to work could get forty acres of land, plowed and ready to plant. 425
"The intention is to continue the breaking until every working Indian on 243
the reserve is supplied with whatever acreage he is capable of cultivating."[132]
In 1909, 820 acres were broken for fifteen Indians.[133] The farms ran together [311]
in a great strip to facilitate the plowing that was done with a steam plow [556]
bought with tribal funds, but the report explicitly states, "each man [407]

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[128] Waines, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

[129] 1909, Vol. 15, No. 27, p. 169; also Harry D. Biele, interview in 1939 with R. C. Wilson, former agent of the Blood.

[130] *idem.*

[131] Speaking of agriculture, Hudson (*op. cit.*, p. 31) says of this herding tribe, [171]
"Only the poorest individuals who had neither animals nor any other means of subsistence resorted to it." Owen Lattimore (*High Tartary*, p. 245) notes a similar situation. "In the new tendency, it is the young man not established and the man who fails to hold his own as a flock-master, herder, and raider who drifts out of the nomadic life and settles on the land."

[132] 1910, Vol. 17, No. 27, p. 174.

[133] 1909, Vol. 15, No. 27, p. 169.

> than I. When he came, he was still single, but he remained with me for several years 465
> after his marriage. He lived in the same house with me. He received no regular pay, 464
> but he was given board and lodging. Sometimes I made him a gift. In the fall I would take him to the dry goods store and fit him out. After his marriage, I boarded his wife as well. Besides this, he kept $4.00 out of each $8.00 I paid for hauling the grain to the elevator. There were about thirty hauls.

Says Ned Sloane,

> Spotted Tail, my father-in-law's brother's son worked for me three summers and winters. He was single and lived in my house. He received no regular wage, but besides his board and lodging, I gave him a horse at the end of each year, a complete riding outfit, some clothes, and a small cash bonus every so often. When he married he left me, but his brother who was still single took his place and worked for me for two years.

Shamanism appealed only to the old who were still willing to purchase 556
medicine with horses and validate it with dreams. The herders continued to [756]
build up their position as they had in the past. They bought medicine bundles; they joined societies; they honored their sons and daughters with lavish payments in both horses and goods for ceremonial privileges. The new rich spent their money on seeds, implements, barns, and wagons. Unwilling to accumulate more than the few horses necessary to their daily tasks, these fortunate farmers felt no urge to enhance their prestige by ceremonial purchase. But they did have favorites "the American way." They honored their children with extravagant outfits, a fine saddle horse, a fine saddle. While they spent their money differently from the horse owners, they were just as eager to set their sons and daughters apart from the sons and daughters of the poorer families as were the owners of the large herds.

SUMMARY.—During this decade income spread was greatest and Blood 433
prosperity at its peak. With few exceptions, the new farming program re- 434
ceived its strongest support from those individuals who had the smallest 657
stake in their society. Quick rewards soon set them on a par with the successful herders, but lacking a surplus of horses, they did not validate their position in the customary manner. For the first time in the history of the Blood, a money economy, entirely divorced from the traditional horse economy, flourished exuberantly and with success in this competitive society.

1920–1940

FROST AND DEPRESSION.—At the end of this golden decade, two catas- 433
trophes befell the Blood. The post-war depression caused a sudden drop 458
in commodity prices. Both farmers and herders suffered. But prior to this, 433
the harsh winters of 1919 and 1920 had created a much more fundamental 731
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[1920-1940]

433 change in the fabric of their tribal life. The excessive cold practically
731 annihilated the cattle herds.[140] At one stroke, the accumulated capital of
231 the herders was wiped out. For the farmers the blow was temporary; they
434 still had their land, and after the difficult years a good income, although a
smaller one, could again be derived from wheat. But a herd could not be
replaced in a day, or in a year. Most of the old breeders gave up in despair.
The wheat farmers bought up the cattle that survived.

Pointed Plume, scion of one of those chiefly families that had been ambitious enough to farm as well as herd, says,

> 425 Then in 1919 the winter was very severe. The Government feared for the cattle
> 231 and horses on the range, and the cattle were driven into a cow camp to protect them.
> [731] In spite of all our care, most of the cattle starved. I had only two left. But the still
> high price for wheat made it possible for me to buy more. Weasel White Buffalo,
> [435] my wife's father,[141] said to me, "You are very foolish to raise cattle. You may be
> wiped out again." But I went ahead. Other Indians who had only a few remaining
> [874] cows were glad to sell them to me, and when the Dunbow Industrial School was
> discontinued, I bought up their herd for something like $300. I paid in wheat money
> and horses, one horse or $30 for a cow and a calf. Today I and my two sons have
> 160 head of cattle.

231 The loss of cattle in the cold winters of 1919 and 1920 meant the loss of
556 all cash income to the herders; but enough horses remained[142] to carry on
the traditional exchange and purchase. Again on relief the erstwhile herders
still achieved prestige in the old way, but with this difference: the horse
was no longer the chief symbol of wealth. The agency was quick to recognize this. Horse exchanges and payments are not entered in the official
books, but transactions in wheat and cattle are duly recorded. For the first
time in more than a century, the man with horses was not necessarily the
[575] rich man. Yet he continued to buy eagerly, even compulsively, into socie-
[424] ties although he could not always complete the purchase. He might join
the Horn Society, four times, six times, eight times, but in spite of such constant validation, his position became less secure. He still got "respect" but
"respect" worn thin because it was not bolstered by real wealth. Then, as
now, real wealth was in the hands of those men who had gone into farming
around 1910.

434 Never again did cattle herding approach its former peak or popularity.
657 In 1930, there were only 1300 head of cattle on the reserve, less than one-

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[231] [140] According to the 1922 report, Vol. 8, No. 27, p. 50, only 1376 head remained.

[141] The father of Pointed Plume's third wife.

[142] The number of horses affected by the cold was considerably less than the number of cattle. A clue to this situation is given by Hudson (*op. cit.*, p. 31). He writes: "The horses would first break the crust of snow with their hoofs and eat the top of the grass. After which the other animals could get at the remaining stalks."

[1920-1940]

425 Easy access to good land is no longer possible, and the best of it has been
allotted. A young and ambitious Blood must either turn again to wages, as
indeed the sons of rich farmers have done, or if he is not content with the
marginal land still available, he must wheedle an idle farm from a more
[426] fortunate if less industrious tribesman. He may get it as a loan or on a rental
[427] basis, but he is never certain how long he will be permitted to crop it. The
more successful he is, the more eager the renter will be to reclaim his land
[578] and try his hand at it again. Violent conflict and familial hostility frequently
result.

● 556 CHANGING PRESTIGE FACTOR.—Distinctions between rich and poor are
184 still drawn, and frequently these obscure expected behavior. The rich
daughter-in-law is served; the poor one does the work. The poor son-in-law
[606] is disparaged. Even the impoverished herder or unsuccessful farmer, in
[581] memory of a better day, will storm when his daughter marries a poor
orphan. A poor sister-in-law said of her rich one, "She always makes me
[607] work for her at her house, but she never does anything when she visits
me." A poor young wife who may make a simple and justified request will
be sarcastically told, "Go home, you *minipoka*." The real "favorite" may
exploit his childhood privilege in the face of little criticism even after he has
reached adulthood.

593 The beautiful and discontented wife of a poor man may brazenly flaunt
937 her affair with her rich lover, but the unhappy wife of a rich man will find
577 some more dignified way of showing her dissatisfaction. When her husband
philanders, she may refuse to cook his food; she may roll up in her own
556 blanket and deny him his conjugal rights; she may leave him, or she may
184 entertain his mistress, ply her with fine gifts, and receive the approbation
of society "because she shows no jealousy."

[575] A chief or member of the Horn Society is also roundly applauded when
he shows no jealousy; but the poor husband who sits by and silently witnesses the drunken love-making of his wife and her rich lover receives no
[593] respect for his restraint. A spoiled and wealthy woman may forbid her
[584] "favorite" the house; she may take his horses and disinherit him if she
disapproves of his marriage. A woman less economically secure, even if she
is known as "manly-hearted," may uphold the authority of her "favorite"
at all cost, as the one sure means of maintaining family prestige.

557 The advantages of a good marriage are quickly recognized. A wealthy
Pointed Plume will say, "All women chase a rich man." A poor William
Curtis will say, "A man should marry his daughter to someone who can
take care of her."

178 But the changing status of various groups within Blood society is strik-
581 ingly revealed by an analysis of marriage trends. Thirty years ago marriages still followed the earlier pattern. The wealthy cattle men continued

to select mates from their own circles. The poor married each other; half- 581
breeds married half-breeds[150] or orphaned members of the tribe. Sometimes, 178
it is true, an ambitious but poor young man succeeded in marrying a wealthy [557]
but considerably older woman; sometimes a father of a poor but beautiful
daughter succeeded in marrying her off to a wealthy husband; sometimes a
rich herder preferred a poor son-in-law whose labor he could exploit. But
the lines remained clearly drawn. Rarely were the "newly rich" able to
crash the "old society."

Today another trend is visible. Numerous marriages have taken place 556
between the children of the "newly rich" and the children of those cattle- 581
breeding families who went into farming around 1910. These are the fami- 178
lies that have cash incomes, good houses, good clothes, good automobiles.
It is now the impoverished horse owner who is the undesirable. His children
are marrying the poor and the orphaned.[151]

SUMMARY.—After a decade of prosperity, an accident of climate created 178
a social upheaval among the Blood. The cold winters of 1919 and 1920 prac- 231
tically annihilated the cattle and reduced the erstwhile successful herder to [731]
penury, at least in terms of a money economy. But he still possessed suffi-
cient horse wealth to validate his prestige as he had always done. His [556]
waning security, however, led to a compulsive buying of privilege, more [754]
particularly in the Horn Society, whose members' power to sorcerize may
well have been an added inducement during this time of deprivation.[152] [575]

The farmers suffered also, but only temporarily. With their profits from [424]
wheat they bought up the few remaining cattle, and made no effort to com- 511
pete for recognition with their few horses. They continued to improve their 178
land and buildings, to furnish their houses comfortably, to dress their wives
and children in style. The drought and depression of the early thirties, [657]
however, forced many of them on the relief rolls of the agency. Discouraged
they have ceased to cultivate their crops. Today, the better land is being [425]
concentrated in the hands of the few.

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[150] Most of the half-breeds on the Blood Reserve are the children of Indian women [563]
and white traders (see story of Revenge Walker, p. 11). They are known by the
name of their father (Creighton, Davis, Gladstone, Beebe, etc.).

[151] No formal statistics on marriages were collected, but the present statement [123]
of trends seems justified by remarks of informants, direct observation, and an ex- [127]
amination of marriages recorded by the agency census.

[152] Clyde Kluckhohn, *Navajo Witchcraft*. Discussing a rise in the last two years [171]
"in the number of persons whom gossip accuses as witches," he writes: "While
this increase . . . may also be connected with the relative economic prosperity
of this interval, I am inclined to regard both the witchcraft and the ceremonial
phenomena as alternative responses directed toward the preservation of a badly
disturbed equilibrium." Cf. also A. I. Hallowell, ***Psychological Characteristics of the Northeastern Indians***, MSS.

A [See Categories 578 and 621--Analyst]

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178 Among the Blood, more and more, wealth has become the determining factor in status, and increasingly it is wealth divorced from the old horse economy. The man with many initiations to his credit is still honored by a privileged seat at the left of his host, but it is with the successful man, be he herder or farmer, full-blood or half-breed, that the young men wish to identify.

IV. SOME FURTHER CHANGES IN SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

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[128] Program and accident frequently effected radical changes in Blood economy and social stratification. Perhaps no less radical are the changes that occurred in such institutions as the bands, the men's societies, the women's society, and the bundle transfers. Like the former, they also reveal a rhythm that can only be understood in terms of historical events. Unfortunately, the shortness of our field trip and the inevitable incompleteness of our material, makes a detailed analysis impossible. Yet it seems worthwhile at this time to offer what descriptive and statistical data are at hand and to indicate the general direction of change, if not the numerous oscillations in the line.

Bands

621
622
[619]
[643] The bands existing today are (1) Fisheaters, (2) Pacer-Fisheaters, a split-off, (3) Black-Elks, (4) Lone-Fighters, (5) Followers-of-the-Buffalo, (6) Many-Children, (7) Many-Tumors, (8) Hairy-Shirts.[113] Each has its own head, excepting the Followers-of-the-Buffalo and the Many-Children who recently "elected" one man to represent both of them. The Fisheaters are the largest and Blanket Man, their leader, is also "Treaty Chief," i.e., the recognized head of the tribe. His father, Crop-eared-Wolf, was the tribal leader before him, and before Crop-eared-Wolf the latter's stepfather, the famous Red Crow who signed Treaty No. 7 in 1877. Until then, according to an informant, he had merely been just another, though powerful, band chief.

621
361
[311]
[427] Life now is sedentary, but the bands still tend to settle in separated locales. However, something over twenty years ago, when they moved from the Lower Reserve (in the north) because these fields were to be set aside for grazing or leased to whites, they did not all succeed in getting continuous strips on the Upper Reserve (in the south). Many individuals built

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[113] For a comparative list made shortly after 1910 see Wissler, *Social Life*, p. 21.

homes far removed from the band lands. A member of the Lone-Fighters 621
said, "The bands are all mixed up now," and certainly it is true that a man [361]
would know to what band he belonged, but his information regarding others
was frequently unreliable. Yet, at the Sun Dance in the summer of 1939, [796]
the bands took their places in the camp circle in a recognized order: west to [823]
south, Fisheaters, Pacer-Fisheaters, Hairy-Shirts; south to east, Followers-
of-the-Buffalo, Many-Children; east to north, Lone-Fighters; north, Many-
Tumors; north to east, Black-Elks.

Even in the distant past the organization of the bands had been loose, 621
and there is little evidence that this recent geographical dislocation weak- 178
ened their cohesiveness to any substantial degree. It is even possible that
the fixed dwellings made it more difficult to change from one to another.
Band leadership, on the other hand, has been considerably modified both
by political and economic change.

In the nomadic past, a leader's power depended upon strong support 622
from family and band. For this he paid in "generous-giving." "No Black- 556
foot," writes Wissler, "can aspire to be looked upon as a head man unless he 431
is able to entertain well, often invite others to his board, and make a practice
of relieving the wants of his less fortunate band members."[154] Today, a band 657
leader may be called upon to make decisions regarding leaseholds; he may 622
influence the distribution of government property (one informant cynically [661]
observed that all the thirty wagons assigned to the tribe in 1939 found their
way into the hands of the chiefs' relatives); he may be called in to help
settle disputes; and barring malfeasance, he can expect to hold office for
life. But—and this is the crux of the matter—the Canadian Government
distributes the rations; the Canadian Government gives credit on seeds,
stock, wagons, and tools. The Canadian Government frequently subsidizes
the building of houses and barns. The need to support native leadership is [178]
obviously reduced.

Moreover, the early emphasis on individualistic behavior has survived. [156]
For this reason, the implementation of a government program does not [178]
depend entirely on the assistance of a tribal intermediary, such as the com- [171]
munity leader of the Navaho,[155] the pueblo priests or their secular surro-
gates. Among the Blood, when chiefly authority fails to win cooperation,
the Administration can still hope for success by appealing directly to in-
terested members of the tribe.

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[154] *Ibid.*, p. 23. *Cf.* also Lewis (*op. cit.*, p. 42) who points out that the authority of chiefs in the buffalo period increased when they had a monopoly of the fur trade and weakened when they were faced with intra-tribal competition.

[155] Solon T. Kimball and John H. Provinse, *Navajo Social Organization in Land Use Planning*, pp. 18-25.

Seizers.[158] Excepting for the Horns, who present a special problem, membership 575
falls off noticeably in the upper grades. This may well have been the
tendency in the pre-reserve period, for increasing age, limited bundles,[159] [178]
and selective memberships[160] were all considerations then. They figure [424]
equally prominently in the reserve period; but with the introduction of a
money economy divorced from a horse economy, a large sector of the population
voluntarily cut itself off from ceremonial purchase. Successful farmers, 575
who had only enough horses for their agricultural needs, were unwilling 184
to jeopardize their profits by paying out valuable animals for old-time 626
"respect." From 1910–1920, the wealthy horse and cattle owners (who at
that time also had sufficient cash) were little concerned with this heretical [556] ●
attitude; but their almost unrelieved poverty since 1920 (except for horses)
has made them more sensitive to the continued refusal of this group to participate
in the traditional way. In 1939, though waning membership was not
an issue, the Horn Society exerted tremendous pressure on the richest
farmer to join its ranks. His two fine teams and well-rigged buggy, his bolts
of cloth and many blankets made an impressive display at the public transfer.
But he himself showed little appreciation of the honor accorded him.
"Blackmail," he called it, and his complaints both before and after initiation
were many and loud.

The Pigeons, the youngest of the graded societies,[161] are having difficulties 575
too, but these are difficulties of membership. Ideally, each group is supposed 424
to sell out after four years, but the present owners have had to hold their
bundles for more than seven. The younger men are reluctant to make even [556]
the nominal payment of "$5.00 and a couple of blankets," for the questionable
advantage of traditional privilege.

575
A combination of factors has contributed to the exceptional popularity 554
of the Horns: (1) they merged with the Bulls, thus increasing the number [754]
of memberships available; (2) only in this society do the wives join with [837]
[577]

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[158] These data and those which follow on the Women's Society, Sun Lodge builders, [114]
medicine pipes and beaver bundles were collected in the main by Marjorie Lismer
and Harry D. Biele. Unfortunately, limited time and the great size of the reserve [128]
made extensive checking impossible. They are offered here, not as a completely
accurate record, but in the belief that, in a general way, they reflect certain broad
social trends.

For comparison, cf. Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, pp. 365-6 and 369. For an early list of Blackfoot societies, see Maximilian, *op. cit.*, p. 255 ff.

[159] Wissler, *Blackfoot Societies*, p. 386.

[160] *Idem.*

[161] Wissler has made a point for society rank based on "assumed seniority in [554]
historical origin" (*Blackfoot Societies*, p. 368). Such an assumption would be strengthened
by the position of the Pigeons who are not listed by Wissler as late as 1910
for the Blood.

In 1808, Henry wrote in his journal, "The women appear to be held in 562
slavery and stand in awe of their husbands."[179] Their work, was indeed hard 175
and long. They cooked the meals, treated the skins, sewed them into cloth- [593]
ing and tipi coverings, raised and lowered these cumbersome shelters, and
saw to the transportation of family goods on the march. "The young men," [462]
again comments Henry, "appear proud and haughty, and are particular to [515]
keep their garments and robes clean. The women are a filthy set."[180]

Yet even in this hunting and raiding society of the past, women enjoyed 562
a comparatively strong position—and this despite their onerous duties, the 593
payment of a bride price, the continual suspicion and accusation of adultery, 175
the harsh punishment for a breach of fidelity.[181] For in those not too distant
days, a woman could lead a war party; she could be designated a favorite;
she could own property, receive and exercise medicine power, and give
names. She was a necessary part of every ceremonial transfer; she was the
custodian of the bundles that her husband bought. The public initiation of
the Horn Society still dramatizes the man's dependence. It is the wife who
receives the power from the seller. Her husband can only gain possession
from her.

Above and beyond the pressure of the reserve, the Blood woman has 562
maintained this early importance. Although differently expressed, she is 593
today, as she was in the past, a valuable asset. Her tanning and bead-work
make a great show on ceremonial occasions; she runs her husband's home
and participates in his transactions; she keeps her earnings and has con-
siderable say about his; she chooses her partner in the social dance; she is
still a necessary adjunct to his ceremonial life. Undeterred by the threat of
punishment, she accepts flirtatious advances and often initiates them. She
is secure in her womanhood.

But like the man, it is the rich woman in particular, although sometimes 556
the beautiful one, who is arrogantly sure of herself. A rich woman is spoiled 593
and demanding. A beautiful one will not hestitate to take another woman's
husband or flaunt her lover before her own when he cannot satisfy her with
handsome clothes. Rich or poor, she may leave her husband at will; but the
fathers of the poor are apt to urge their daughters to remain, while fathers
of the rich have frequently been known to take them home "because their
husbands didn't treat them right."[182]

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[179] Henry and Thompson, *Journals*, p. 526.

[180] *Ibid.*, p. 525.

[181] *Ibid.*, p. 572. Cf. also Maximilian, *Travels*, p. 253; Bradley, *Characteristics*, p. 271; and Wissler, *Social Life*, p. 10 ff.

[182] *Ibid.* Wissler quotes a Piegan as saying, ". . .if a man who gives a few presents [583]
or pays nothing becomes exacting, the woman's relatives will remark that as he paid
little or nothing he should desist; they may even take her away and find another
husband for her."

577 Some few women on the reserve are called "manly-hearted."[183] They
156 come, with one exception, from families rich in horses. The exception,
562 significantly, is a half-breed whose antecedents had neither property nor
prestige. However, her aggressive personality and her present success—she
● [556] is now the wife of a chief and in good circumstances—make her inclusion
in this group completely acceptable to the Blood.[184]

[556] In many respects the behavior of these women resembles the behavior
of men of wealth, but the essential pattern of their lives always remains
safely within the framework set for women as a sex. A manly-hearted
woman never wears men's clothing; she marries, and frequently she marries
many times; she has children. But early in childhood she will exhibit her
independence and aggressiveness. She will strike other children who are
older and bigger; she will even strike an older brother who is a privileged
"favorite." She will visit around and stay out over-night though other girls
remain obediently at home. She may make advances in affairs of the heart;
she may refuse to marry the man of her father's choice; she will marry in
her own time, and she will not hesitate to beat off an irate husband. She
[581] is usually an excellent worker. This as well as her passionate response to
love make her a desirable mate despite her wilfulness and domineering ways.

It is on the strength of her total personality that a woman is called manly-
hearted, and the category covers a considerable range of behavior. Some
may become vowers of the Sun Lodge, and their sexual aggressiveness may
be tempered by the "chaste" life required of them.[185] Others may believe
that their status depends upon building up a "favorite," even if he dominate
them; still others may feel sufficiently secure in their own wealth to domi-
[556] nate their "favorite."[186] Trends of behavior observable among women of
wealth are intensified in the manly-hearted woman. While frequently disparaged, they make her, paradoxically enough, even more desirable.

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[184] [183] Lewis has reported that there are fourteen manly-hearted women on the North Piegan Reserve (*Manly-Hearted Women among the North Piegan*, p. 176). The Blood, whose population is more than double that of the North Piegan, cited only nine (Harry D. Biele, Field Notes). It is possible that due to the spread of wealth, those personality traits that distinguish the manly-hearted woman have become so general in certain groups of Blood, that the special designation seems of lesser significance. For an example in the past, see Red Crow's sister, Revenge Walker, p. 11 ff. A

[184] [184] Cf. *ibid.*, p. 177. Here Lewis claims that such an upstart would never be classified among the manly-hearted women by the Piegan.

[796] [185] I know of no manly-hearted woman vowing the Sun Lodge in bravado, fully aware that her former life made her ineligible to do so. For a contrary statement, see Lewis (*op. cit.*, p. 184). However, there are instances among the Blood where a woman was forced against her will to make the vow so that her husband might be sure of her virtue. Such sins do not go unpunished. (See story p. 51.) B

[186] See pp. 65 ff. C

A. [See Categories 578 and 621--Analyst]

B. [See Category 796--Analyst] C. [See Category 159--Analyst]

If the manly-hearted woman is regarded as a product of established and 562
traditional wealth, "Miss Wells' girls" illustrate the possibility for mobility 156
within the more recent society. Half-breeds, most of them, and without inherited 177
property, these "girls," now in their late forties, were sent to school
at an early age and only rarely spent their holidays with their Indian relatives. 184
When other children returned to their parents, this unwanted group 563
went off with their teacher to a summer camp where they worked and
experimented in cooperative living. Miss Wells understood her girls. She
mothered them and imbued them with enthusiasm for white ways. They,
in turn, loved and respected her. Today these "girls" are the most progressive
women of their generation—and the most ambitious. Several assisted [464]
at the school after "graduation." One earned her living as a dressmaker
in a white community. Later she returned to become the first and
only independent woman farmer on the reserve. It is to this group that the
up-and-coming wheat farmers, mostly half-breeds themselves, have looked
for wives. These farmers are now the "newly rich," and two of them have [622]
been elected band chiefs.

Many women enjoy independent earnings, but these have never been 562
great enough to radically affect their social status. Now, as in the past, vertical
mobility is achieved through advantageous marriage. Marriage, however, [557]
plays a lesser rôle in the life of the woman of wealth. A union with the [556]
son of a rich family naturally cements her position; but a union with a poor
man does not, ipso facto, lower it. On the contrary, her property can be used
to enhance his earning power and prestige. If he is industrious, both will [586]
gain; if he proves unsatisfactory, she can cast him off and with little difficulty
find a more deserving mate. Few women, however, have much property.
Most of them, despite the privileges they enjoy, shine in reflected [181]
glory in this dominantly masculine society. In childhood, their status
depends upon their fathers' status, in adulthood, upon their husbands'.
Significantly, and in contrast to feminist practice in the Pueblos, a Blood [553]
woman is always known after marriage by her husband's name. [171]

Jealousy.—While this male dominance is indisputable, it gives small
comfort to the man on the reserve, for jealousy is one of the most disruptive 152
forces in Blood human relations. The woman is still considered a form of 578
property, property that is as necessary to success today as it was in the [421]
polygamous past. Then the younger wives were known as "uncertain wives," [562]
and lapses in matrimonial duty received summary and harsh treatment. [595]
Writing in 1832, Maximilian comments, "They generally punish infidelity
in their wives very severely, cutting off their noses in such cases. . . . When 175
ten or twelve tents were together, we were sure to see six or seven women 684
mutilated in this manner. . . . There have been frequent instances of a
husband immediately killing his wife, when she had had intercourse with

593 Favorites are well aware of the envy their position arouses in their less
858 petted brothers and sisters. One said,

> My father treated me with great affection. Others in the household obeyed him, but he often gave in to me. When I was little he carried me on his back so I wouldn't tire. He always took me with him and never said a mean word to me. Whenever I cried I was picked up immediately. When my mothers were cooking, I was allowed to go to the pot first and select the choicest morsel. All this showed I was a favorite son.
>
> I often fought with my little sister. Although my mother was sorry for her and sometimes tried to take her away when she was getting the worse of it, she would never punish or scold me. My sister always grabbed at my necklace. If she ripped it off, she would hide it, but my father always made her give it back to me. My sisters fussed about the special treatment I was getting. They were jealous and complained that our father wasn't treating them fairly.

593 Other unprivileged siblings have also been impelled to show their dis-
858 satisfaction. At a favorite's birthday feast attended by some fourteen old
578 and respected members of society, a cake with candles (!) was proudly
carried in. A young sister of the birthday child quickly blew them out. Neither the tearful protests of the *minipoka* nor a slap in the face diminished the unconcealed pleasure of the culprit. "If I blow out the candles," she said gleefully to the outraged favorite, "it is my birthday, not yours."

A little boy of six asked his father with pathetic eagerness, "Won't you have me for your *minipoka*, as my grandfather has my sister Myrtle?" Then gazing at his unshod feet, he added ruefully, "I cannot be a *minipoka*, I have no shoes." A stepson so resented the attention his stepfather lavished on his own daughters, who were favorites the "American way," that he left home to live with a married sister.

593 To be sure, not all families have favorites either in the traditional terms
858 of in the "American way," but the pattern is so deeply ingrained in the
556 struggle for wealth and recognition that it colors the thoughts and speech
of many whose families have never been able to support a *minipoka*. One man went so far as to say, "A poor person might part with his last horse to buy a ceremonial object for his child in the hope that he would then be called a *minipoka*."

593 Rivalry, however, finds frequent expression even when "real" favoritism
578 is not involved. A little girl of two threw her newborn brother from the bed
and tried to strangle him. A young mother told how, as a child, she allowed her little sister's wagon to roll down hill, turn over, and spill the youngster in the mud because "she was so spoiled when she was sick." A grandmother recalled her resentment when her father gave a fine weasel-tail suit to an older sister and brought candy to a younger brother, despite the certain knowledge that food given to one sibling would surely be shared with all the others. A brother complained that his parents always gave in to his

war deeds and political authority being equal, would ordinarily not join 561
a war expedition led by one who was his junior. Among war chiefs who had [701]
already made their major coups, seniority was as important a factor in
prestige as the number of major coups. [554]

Unlike the Pawnee and the Comanche one's prestige did not decline after [555]
the last war deed. War was understood as a means for acquiring wealth,
and if one were already wealthy, status could be maintained in certain 556
spheres without war deeds. Once one had built an adequate herd of horses, 721
there was no humiliation for those who preferred to remain in camp. Moreover, 554
after renouncing warfare, one might gain further prestige. Ceremonial [778]
life was another form of competition with property as one of the stakes; a [425]
man surpassed another by paying more for an article of ceremonial importance
or by acquiring more sacred articles. The tribal chiefs themselves [621]
were usually older men who had already distinguished themselves as warriors. [622]
Having given up the war path, they settled with their large herds of
horses to help their relatives and thus established their positions as leaders
in civil life. In this status of leader a man with less wealth and fewer coups
might surpass a man with a finer war record who had greater wealth but less
generosity. Above all, the mere fact of having grown old was regarded with 888
respect, for one must have power in order to grow old. Hence, it was any 561
dignified old man who with his liaisons to supernatural powers said prayers [782]
for the departing warriors. In fact, they prayed that the young man who
offered them a pipe would have a long life and many children. [889]

The general structure of the age societies exemplifies this pattern still 575
further. The societies such as the Bees and the Prairie Chickens were 561
entered by many young men, required little outlay of wealth for membership
and served mainly for display, recreation, and solidifying the bonds [556]
between comrades. Those high in the hierarchy of age societies such as the
members of the Catchers and the Horn societies were necessarily older men
of sufficient wealth to pay a relatively high price for admission. Hence the
group of members was not large. In addition these societies were entrusted [692]
with legal authority, based in part on the supernatural power which membership
gave them. We thus see again the tendency to associate with age
both authority and supernatural power. Though the Crazy Dogs, lying [761]
about midway in the hierarchy of age societies, might sing the old Plains
song, "We do not want to become old," this was sung perhaps more in [533]
derision of their "enemy society" than as an expression of the desire to die
young.

Within the residence group any remarks on authority must be prefaced 592
by the observation that the smaller units were in the final analysis autonomous. 596
Each household unit was free to move any place it desired at the
will of the man who was head. Among the households that coalesced into

592 an extended family, the eldest male was in authority, though any of the
596 constituent households might terminate this authority by camping elsewhere.
[621] Similarly the senior member of an extended family could curtail
the authority of the band chief by withdrawing with his kinsmen to another
band or by forming an independent band, were the group sufficiently large.
[571] All groupings larger than the individual household presupposed that the
military and economic benefits of membership outweighed the disadvantages
of submission to authority.

596 Assuming stable conditions, authority in the extended family lay with the
561 senior male. At his death the next oldest was presumptive head of the family.
[603] As a group there was little contact between the young and those of
grandparent status, though an individual might warm to one or more of his
[626] grandchildren and favor him in various ways. A child who spent considerable
time with old people received the mildly derogatory term of *kıpitė'puka*
("old-woman-child") because of imitating unconsciously the mannerisms
of old people and hence acting beyond its age. Although an exception to the
rule correlating age with authority may appear in the individual household,
[888] even here the elder might be active in an advisory capacity. Only under
extreme circumstances were old people allowed to die as outcasts. When
transportation was difficult or food running short, then with regret, often
[886] at their own request, the old were left behind on the march. To be sure, the
rule of senior authority was modified when it was realized that senility had
appeared. Then the next in age tactfully assumed the major administrative
role in the extended family or the band, if it had not already been relinquished.

● 556 The age-authority hierarchy was further reinforced by economic considerations.
431 It was the pattern to associate prestige with generosity. Those who
561 gave generously increased their own prestige, providing that they did not
593 bankrupt themselves thereby. Within the extended family it was the
practice to encourage siblings to give to their juniors. This was not only an
554 expression of endearment or of aiding a weaker person, as it was often
phrased. It also had the effect of putting juniors in the debt of seniors. To
be sure these debts were not the same within the family as outside the
family between unrelated persons, for repayment between relatives was
[684] not categorical. Yet we have such instances as a young man raiding for
horses to repay his father. The father had given horses in settlement to
a husband whose wife had had an affair with the son. In other cases where
an older brother had made his son a favored child, the younger brother gave
abundantly to this favored child, "to repay the older brother for his kindness
to him in his youth." We have also noted that young men returning
from war always gave some portion of their booty to older brothers. The
practice was to give first to the older because "they would not live so long
as the younger."

652 Consequently few of the long-range programs were started, per capita payments were made, and in most cases, the money was spent for immediate needs.

Summary

433 The emphasis, in this chapter, has been upon the economic
177 problems of Blackfeet readaptation following the depletion of the buffalo. The pressures put upon the people, both directly and indirectly, to change other parts of their culture can be summarized now and related to the problem of the maintenance or replacement of the traditional value and prestige systems.

The end of the hunting economy made hunting skills obsolete.
Migratory seasonal dwelling patterns lost their function. Dependency
undermined band and tribal leadership. Warfare and horse raiding were
[556] stopped. A man no longer was able to exhibit bravery in the hunt, in
war, or on the raid. He no longer could use these means to acquire
property with which to display generosity.

Other cultural characteristics were seen to have been under
strong pressure. Indian beliefs, religion, ritual, curing practices
and some aspects of social life had been discouraged or outlawed for
[554] many years. The acceptance of hospitalization and modern medicine
closed Indian curing as a channel to prestige. The conversion of many
people to Christianity, and the suppression of religious expression
[554] and ritual, undermined these beliefs and practices. The religious
avenues to status were slowly blocked.

Many people remained committed to the old values but were hard pressed to make economic adaptation and at the same time express the

177 communities--Warm Springs, Yakima, Umatilla, Crow, Gros Ventre,
184 Cheyenne, Assiniboine, Mandan, Flathead and Cree, among others.
541 Sleeping and cooking tents are erected behind the tepee circle and
[574] upwards of seven hundred people will be living on the grounds during
the encampment. Each family camping on the grounds is paid a cash
allowance toward their maintenance and shares in a daily meat or food
ration.

The formal program opens with a parade through the main street
of Browning and out to the encampment grounds near the Museum of the
[535] Plains Indian, one-half mile west of town. A regular program of Indian
[533] dancing to the accompaniment of singing and drumming by local and
visiting singing groups is scheduled each afternoon, and occasionally
continues during the evening if the weather permits.

The dancing sessions are interrupted frequently by both planned
and unplanned intermission activities--special dance contests, games,
[431] and "give-aways." Some of the last mentioned gift giving ceremonies
are sponsored by the Indian Days Committee to honor and give gifts
[553] to invited guests from other tribes. Others are put on by individuals
[556] and families who wish, and are expected, to give gifts in remembrance
[554] of a deceased relative, to give a new and significant Indian name to a
child in a public naming ceremony, or to honor some other person by a
[533] display of generosity in his name. At the 1959 celebration two Chiefs
had the singers sing their respective power songs and then gave gifts
to friends and visitors.

[648] Another almost regularly occurring part of the program is a
ceremony in which distinguished visitors are adopted into the Blackfeet

177 and told their sons about that life, so their tie with the past is
184 real. The Chiefs have lived through three-quarters of a century of
554 the changes described in Chapter V, so the wisdom they profess has a
565 basis in experience with the white man. They were active participants in the trials of change, having tried many of the programs for economic readaptation with varying degrees of success. In the course of these economic ups and downs, these men accepted some change, but also tried to maintain the traditions as they knew them. Their ability to do this has made them both the advisers and symbols they now are for numbers of people.

The high status position of these men is fairly stable, but
[571] still depends on the numbers and support of their followers. Their
[431] claims to status must be validated by continued service and acts of
[556] generosity. They are not wealthy, but they have shared what they had in better times and perform services presently that validate their positions.

177 The Chiefs do not present a united front, and are still rivals
184 for additional prestige. They criticize one another and are gossiped
554 about by other people. One old man will dismiss the tales of another
565
578 as "lies." "He doesn't know anything. The truth is . . . ." Another
[424] will be criticized for telling war stories. "He once put a story in the paper about how he scalped a Crow Indian . People laugh at him. He shouldn't tell those stories, they don't belong to him. My daddy told me not to tell these war stories, they're the property of the people who did the things."

177 The Chiefs, then, are honored for their ability to symbolize
184 and to advise about and maintain these traditions. The knowledge and
554
565

particular owner. To possess a large herd of horses is today still a sign 231
of opulence. In 1939 there were 1,650 head of horses owned by 154
Indians. These horses may be divided into two categories: (1) Draft [556]
horses which are bought by the agency with trust funds and given
out to farmers and old people. These have no commercial value in [657]
themselves because they are restricted from sale or change of title [425]
by agency regulations. (2) Horses which have been purchased by
an Indian or given to him independently of the agency. These consist
mostly of light, unbroken horses which have been acquired
probably through the intra- or inter-reserve system of horse trading
and gift-giving. An Indian is free to handle these animals as he
wishes.

Eleven Indians are raising horses on a more or less major scale 233
for commercial sale. The range mares are bred with blooded stallions,
the colts allowed to run wild for two years, and then broken
to saddle or harness. Such horses usually bring at least $50 each. [435]
With a 25 per cent annual increase in the herd and a herd of 50, a
man could expect a minimum gross income of about $600. Frequently [434]
these horses bring more than $50. The income from horses [435]
has been about $5,000 per annum during the past few years, so that [434]
at present these eleven Indians have a fairly substantial business.
There is a considerable potential industry here, if the reserve could
supply its own work horses, unless draft horses were supplanted by
tractors. In 1939, $1,000 was spent buying horses from three of
these raisers for the use of the farmers. This trend has been encouraged
by the purchase of blooded stallions with trust funds in an
effort to increase the market price of reserve horses. The limits of
this type of enterprise are set in part by the available pasture; yet
there is a genuine interest here, for the raisers themselves are eager
for fine stock. They have been known to pay a white man several
hundred dollars for a good horse, part thoroughbred, with a special
eye, however, to its racing capacities.

Old range animals are also sold for $10 to $20 to farms near by as [435]
meat for foxes. A few young men are good riders and have made
several hundred dollars by bronco riding at neighbouring stampedes 541
and rodeos. The latter is a popular, though not very lucrative, 434
occupation.

(3) *Miscellaneous sources of income.* One of the few remaining
sources of income for the Blackfoot which continues from buffalo 193
days as a portion of the indigenous cultural fabric is the fee to the 434
functionary who directs religious ceremonials. This may well be

657 presence of certain witnesses. Today the agent encourages the
428 making of wills in his presence while a man is still in sound health;
this document is then filed at the agency until the testator's death.[1]
Thereby property acquired through trust funds may change hands, e.g., work horses, wagons, etc. These distributing mechanisms have been introduced to the reserve by whites and are for the most part foreign to the culture.

571 Fundamental to the Blackfoot distributing system is one central
431 concept which appears in some form in many institutions. It is the
Plains concept of the virtue of generosity. To most Blackfoot Indians
● 556 wealth is not so important in terms of accumulation of property as
for the prestige and security that can be acquired by giving it away.
571 Many Indians of prominence appear to lack the symbols of wealth
431 that we find necessary, e.g., good furniture, new clothes, many
horses, etc. They may not be wealthy in terms of property possessed, but they are wealthy in terms of the prestige acquired from having given away their property. However, unlike the potlatches of the north-west coast, the Blackfoot emphasize not a single large demonstration of generosity but a continuous show of it. This means that one must be sagacious and resourceful in handling affairs so that one can give away much but still have enough to continue the show. The criticism and self-criticism of many formerly wealthy Indians was not that they were not generous but that they were unable to continue the generosity. This feature is basic to an understanding of Blackfoot economic distributing systems.

434 In our discussion of income we mentioned certain Indian entrepreneurs[2] who make comfortable livings mainly through the sale of
[465] horses. Such persons also manage a system of distribution. They
must have men to care for the herd, and these "hired" men are
provided with food, clothing, and shelter in return for their services.
431 Also, however, the indigent members of the young men's families
are cared for by the entrepreneurs, and it is here that the concept
466 of generosity becomes important. These needy people constitute a
571 market for generosity. The greater the entrepreneur's income the
greater the generosity he can show and the larger the number of persons who are eager for it.

[621] Boy Chief's establishment exemplified such a system. Although
[177] he had a few cattle, his main cash income derived from the horses

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[434] [1] It is uncertain whether a copy of the will must be forwarded to Ottawa. Since valuable property is presumably held by the band, probating by the Departmental Solicitor may not be necessary on the Blackfoot reserve.

[2] Cf. pp. 72-73; 77.

Blackfoot declare that a generally "favourable trade balance" exists 574
in terms of generosity: more exports occur than imports. Some
Indians commented on this with pride, extolling Blackfoot generosity. 431
Others have been less impressed, saying that the Blackfoot
should not be the ones who are always giving.

Religious ceremonies may be viewed as an aspect of distribution. 796
Although the object of Blackfoot religion can be conceived as a
deflector of, or insurance against, certain malignant cosmic forces, the [771]
manner of achieving this constitutes a system of exchange and distribution.
To overcome illness, for example, one vows to purchase 796
a certain medicine bundle, shield, or painted tipi from another.
Ceremonial transfer usually involves many persons singing the 425
songs and performing the proper ritual under the direction of a [155]
master of ceremonies who receives a fee for his services. At the
conclusion food is given to the guests. The cost of the transfer and
the price of the medicine bundle are borne by the recipient. Membership 575
in sacred societies or acquiring a weasel-skin suit operates 425
the same way. The regalia purchased is regarded as a medicine
bundle and gives a guarantee against catastrophe.

A sacred object provides almost continuous opportunities for 778
generosity not only for the owner himself but for all members of his
family. Most sacred objects have annual ceremonies wherein its 796
songs are sung as the bundle is opened and displayed. Here, too, a
paid master of ceremonies is required to lead the songs. During such [465]
a ceremonial considerable quantities of food are given away to all [431]
present. Relatives may help by giving away a blanket, money, or
a horse to a guest in honour of the owner.

The most prosperous Indian, hence (in their terms) those on 422
best terms with cosmic forces, have bought and sold many sacred
objects. This matter of having owned sacred objects then becomes 778
a symbol of generosity. When one has owned a large number of [556]
them, say fifteen, an opportunity arises to exhibit generosity. Such
a person may hold a smoking ceremony at which time he can demonstrate [796]
his past generosity by singing the songs of each sacred
object. Those with fewer sacred objects to their credit will be
unable to sing comparably, thus exposing their lack of generosity.

Many of these distributive mechanisms are used relatively little. 425
It is a rare year when a major sacred object or membership in a
sacred society changes hands. No Medicine Pipe was acquired 778
575

565 ments we deduce three main criteria of class: (1) the amount of property either in horses or cash; (2) the use of this wealth to buy sacred objects and society memberships; (3) the maintenance of good relations with other persons through generosity and social grace.

Of ten high-class people mentioned by an informant, eight own horses, cattle, and land, or make up for the lack of one of these by large holdings of horses and cattle, or land and horses. Of the remaining two, one has little property but a good number of religious possessions to his credit. The other, now relatively poor in property, has owned more sacred objects and society memberships than any other person on the reserve. The persons considered to be in the middle-class are invariably small property owners, but they also have owned some sacred objects and belong to societies. Of eight low-class people only one is moderately well off in that his son owns land, cattle, and horses. All others own little property. Their purchases of sacred objects are few, as are their memberships in societies. [563] Two are Crees from the Cree minority on the reserve ("Crees" involves all the disabilities of a minority group) and this may partially reflect an old prejudice. [559] Thus wealth seems to be an important aspect of class in Blackfoot society.

There is also a connotation of inferiority in the term "low-class." To be low-class or poor implies that one is lazy and has little ambition. On the other hand, to be rich implies that one has worked hard to acquire his property. So convinced are the Blackfoot that a man through personal industriousness can penetrate the barriers between classes, that they believe that those who do not meet this challenge prove themselves *ipso facto* inferior.

571 word of a windfall spreads, a man still finds himself obliged to share
with his kinsmen who come to eat from the newly abundant larder
and return home a few days later with a horse or a blanket.

511 These familial groups are today better provided for through
regularity of income. While fluctuations of fortune continue because
178 of variable growing and market conditions, and while a herd of
horses may diminish overnight from disease, the backlog of rations,
jobs for wages and annuities, together with more effective technological
controls, has helped to reduce serious reverses. As compared
with the hazards to property of an enemy raid during buffalo
days and the short life of an Indian pony when camps were continuously
on the move, the forces stabilizing wealth have certainly
[425] increased. The larger investment in permanent property such as
buildings, beef cattle, and farm implements, tends to be preserved
by passing it on within a family, instead of destroying it or giving
[657] it away to the first comer. This continuity is fostered also by agency
regulations forbidding the transfer of certain property.

A by-product of greater stability is the diminished possibility of
● 556 status mobility, a key incentive in the old system of individual
178 competition. While the Blackfoot still censures the lazy man who
now merely lives from rations, and while the agency does encourage
the industrious with jobs and issues of property, in many respects
personal advancement is more difficult today. The error of favouritism
has been successfully avoided by the agency, and there is
always a considerable number waiting for the agency hand-outs.
Hence there lies no broad avenue for the ambitious. As compared
with buffalo days, the capital investment necessary to become productive
is much larger today. Formerly one could aspire to a herd of
horses, the product of a successful war career, by starting only with
patience, fortitude, and prayer—even without borrowed weapons.
556 Today, before a crop can be raised, even with trust benefits, one
178 must wait for land, take one's turn for the issue of two teams of
horses and then with loaned equipment look forward to the magical
425 convergence of a productive year with a high price for the crop.
[241] Cattle are unobtainable, except through a relation's death or an
agency donation, and having reached in any case the limit of available
[231] pasturage on the reserve, one can expect little from this source.
As for jobs, the permanent ones yield only a meagre income and the
556 temporary ones are mainly helpful in tiding over an emergency.
178 Even the ambitious could ascribe getting ahead to luck rather than
[464] pluck.
[434]

Despite greater social contact than formerly between various 178
sectors of the reserve, the general picture is one of biological families
looking to the agency for income and distributing it within a reduced [434]
circle of kinsmen. Life within these units has become more stabilized [602]
and old incentives have decreased in effectiveness.

(3) After the victory of the older generation in its fight for the 177
issue of rations, the younger generations find them merely a contribution
to their meals. Under the influence of restaurants, stores, and 262
boarding-schools, food habits have changed. Retail stores have inevitably
become the main source of any dietary supplement to the
rations, mostly canned foods and bread. The same trends have 177
occurred with clothing, for dungarees, underwear, shirts, and overcoats
are the common costume of men. Even the conservative 291
women must first buy their yardages of printed calico before making
them into dresses. All except the old and discouraged now sense a 177
need for curtains, cabinets, kitchen tables, and linoleum rugs, items
which are not included in the basic agency issues to the newly [352]
married. Maintaining a household has become unalterably dependent [439]
upon the white economy.

Maintenance services increase this dependence. The Gleichen 177
mechanics and blacksmiths repair Indian cars and farm equipment,
sewing machines, radios, and mechanical washers. The dentist extracts 445
their teeth and orders plates for them. Being human, some
Blackfoot undervalue the free medical services at their hospital and
prefer to patronize, and pay, village doctors and pharmacists. Recreation
at the pool halls and the movies, the cup of tea and the
sandwich at the Chinese restaurant, the occasional trip to Calgary
on the railway, all show further dependence on the white economy.
Indeed, as a consumer the average Blackfoot differs little from the
white farmers and villagers that surround the reserve.

Certain basic attitudes of a market economy have crept in. The 177
virtue of exhibitionistic generosity has decreased in value, and the
virtue, formerly soft-pedalled, of sagacity with property (*sikɪnapsi*, 571
a shrewd person) has gained. This attitude is supported by the
shortage of cash for making necessary purchases and in turn supports [602]
the trend towards a narrower definition of obligation to kinsmen.
An elderly man who had purchased a medicine bundle was 177
openly criticized by his sons and grandchildren for incurring needless
expenses, since the owner of this bundle was expected to hold periodic 778
feasts and give-aways, and with living now geared to the white 602
economy, this was hard to do. A generation ago ownership of this 556

177 same bundle would have been considered a valuable asset in the
778 competition for exhibition of generosity, to say nothing of its super-
natural benefits, and the possessor would have been aided by the
602 pooled resources of his large circle of kinfolk.

●556 Yet there remain significant differences between white and
Indian consumers. Of low status in terms of skills which they can
177 contribute, their returns are less and their share proportionately
smaller. Few Indians have been able to alter their lot through edu-
433 cation, even if they normally could expect employment of their
skills off the reserve. In capital assets, they are paupers, for property
of value in the white economy is usually theirs only for use and not
for disposal. As participants in the white world they would be living
without opportunity for social advance on the bottom rung, with
inadequate diet, the cheapest of clothing, and the most dismal of
houses to rent.

177 This impoverishment not only occurred through dependence on
the white economy, but dependence redefined wealth itself. Starting
436 from a period when wealth was viewed in terms of horses transfer-
able between all Indians, it became increasingly necessary to deal
177 with whites. In these dealings the Indian pony quickly lost its value.
436 Later barter took place, but gradually transactions were restricted
to a currency basis. Now only the agency converts certain defined
437 commodities into cash. With conversion rates determined by the
177 agent and the world market, Indian labour and produce achieve
value for the white economy. In some respects the rate of conversion
657 is the same for Indian and white, yet in others, e.g. wages, seeking
436 to accomplish the most with limited operating funds, the agency
has set conversion at a lower rate than the one found off the reserve.

While the trust funds help mitigate some of the discrepancies
177 between the two worlds, the Blackfoot are still far from possessing
certain key advantages of the white citizen. On the reserve there
177 is little freedom or encouragement of enterprise. Skills of value in
472 the white economy are fostered to a point, but their development
as an enterprise is minimal. The possibility of loans from the trust
[426] fund has not been realized, probably because individuals have not
enough private property to offer as security to make the loan accept-
[453] able to Ottawa. Certainly banks and credit houses are excluded
since the property of these wards is inalienable. Moreover, the
[421] emphasis given by the agency and the council of chiefs has been on
collective advancement rather than on using the trust funds to

CHAPTER FIVE

The Political System

THE BAND CHIEFTAINS

565 IN BUFFALO days all eminent persons of the tribe formed an upper
554 class called "*ıstuyi*," i.e., those before whom one is ashamed. This
is somewhat the equivalent of the contemporary "*ototamapsi*."[1]
[701] Within the *ıstuyi* group there were many degrees of prestige, but it
[622] comprised mainly all the war chiefs and band chiefs. Occasionally
men were found who were not warriors, but who, because of wisdom
701 or supernatural power, enjoyed respected eminence. Anyone with the
requisite number and types of war deeds was considered a war chief.
622 The status of war chief is to be carefully distinguished from that of
the chief of a band who played a more important function in the
social structure of the tribe. Formerly the individual who became a
[701] band chief grew from the membership of the band. First, he had
[555] to become a war chief who distinguished himself, if not excelled,
in feats of battle. This meant *ipso facto* that he was wealthy, for a
successful war chief had horses, guns, and scalps which functioned
622 as economic assets. Of these, a good herd of horses was essential.
556 The second major criterion was that he be generous in the use of
his wealth for the benefit of others. Anyone at any time might ask
such a person for the loan of a horse, gun, or any other article neces-
[431] sary for hunting, war, or some emergency. The band chief or any
potential band chief frequently handed out these articles, especially
horses, as gifts to meritorious persons. Usually eventual reciprocity
62[illegible] was expected, except in the case of the poor. The man of eminence
also had to maintain a small group of young unmarried men to
look after his horses and particularly to hunt for him in order to
provide the extra meat needed for guests, widows, and other needy

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[1] Cf. p. 101.

Blackfoot criteria of chiefly behaviour tends to eliminate those who 643
have no genuine urge to work for tribal welfare. When a boy is just
out of school, he enters upon an initial period of striving to make a 622
living. Aided by the agency and relatives, he marries and takes up
farming. To become chief, he must show energy and persistence
enough to bring some sort of tangible return. This has striking
parallels with the old war-pattern and the related validation of
supernatural powers, for both paths require persistence, and both
are publicly recognized only in terms of tangible results. Indeed, 643
this parallel seems to be recognized by Indians, as indicated by the 622
statement of an informant: 556

> [How do people become chiefs today?] Now-a-days war is out. You cannot get rich that way. Today it depends upon the man, how hard he tries and works. These men [informant names five chiefs] are the ones selected for working hard without going through wars.

Certainly most chiefs have succeeded as workers. In 1939 the members of the council of chiefs owned on the average 41.9 head of cattle as compared with 23.4 for all cattle owners. They also owned 19.2 head of horses on the average, while all owners of horses averaged 10.6. Only one chief had no property of this kind, though he had property at the time of his election. He was criticized for "not continuing his work" but living from the allowance for old people.

Yet merely to amass wealth is inadequate. One must also be 643
generous and "kind-hearted," which means giving time, energy, and
service in behalf of the Indians. One must not only have a cutter 622
and binder for one's grain crop but be willing to lend them to a 571
needy person. If a neighbour needs a hand stacking the bundles of 431
wheat after borrowing the cutter and binder, one should lend a hand.
For all visitors coming to the house, there should be a bowl of tea
or even a plate of meat. As mentioned before in the chapter on
economy, chiefs are under special obligations of generosity, but most
important for the elected chief is that the circle of recipients be
expanded beyond the kinsmen. This wider demand clearly shows the
difference between the elected chief and the entrepreneur type of
chief who needs only to look after his immediate circle of followers.

Furthermore, six out of nine informants in their conversations 643
about chiefs said that the latter should be able "to solve problems."
This is why a man comes to participate in a pressure group, for by 622

596 of the council cannot give jobs to his followers by dint of his posi-
643 tion, though the head of a family can always assist a needy relative.
Through the chiefs an increase in annuity is rarely attained, but a
generous leader of an extended family may answer such a demand
with an occasional five dollars from his own pocket. Finally there
[621] is no longer an identity to the extended family. The band names
covering several widely scattered families function mainly at the
Sun Dance circle. The elected chiefs now unidentified with any
specific group of followers speak mainly for their immediate circle
of relatives and have been accused of neglecting persons with remoter
ties.

596 There exists, nevertheless, a strong feeling on the reserve that
829 the extended family is the proper social unit for living. One man
complained that the size of Blackfoot acreages was too small. Indi-
vidual acreages should be enlarged so that a man could raise more
and make more money. This was not, however, sheer avarice, for
he added, "Then we could take better care of more people." The
Blood reserve is regarded as a model in this respect, for there a few
Indians have several hundred acres and can support a sizable group.
These few wealthy Blood are chiefs in modern dress, for they can
live well and still fulfill their obligations to less fortunate kinsmen.
[556] In comparison the Blackfoot are as a group wealthier yet usually
not sufficiently wealthy in terms of individual productive capacity
to become leaders in the new sense.

Social Organization and Age

561 A delicate balance of cultural rewards was provided in buffalo days for the young and old. The glory of war with all its Plains embellishments furnished rewards for the young. To the old was granted political and religious authority. Though the obligations of a successful warrior as a member of the camp were scarcely onerous, he was, nevertheless, subject to the dicta of his elders. In the home, the transition point between submission to, and wielding, authority occurred about the time of marriage. This was usually at about thirty years of age. As head of a household, a man's interest in stability of social relations increased. The sizable herd of horses gathered on previous raids must be conserved, since home responsibilities kept him from the warpath. This was done by using the horses in canny transactions. It was time now to start giving to the

a labourer or even an onlooker on an agency-managed grain-, cattle-, 657
and coal-producing establishment. From a politically independent
people the tribe has been reduced to a form of peonage.

A second factor has been the failure of the original farming
venture, the success of which meant the difference between mere 241
existence and an ample income. When the Indians originally adopted
farming, it was regarded as a means for becoming wealthy. In the 241
Blackfoot mind there is a definite association of wealth with power, 556
for as we indicated, the chiefs in the past were necessarily wealthy
persons. Through farming the prediction of Many Stars at the time
of the treaty would be realized: "All will be chiefs." This was true [574]
in good years, when Indians could invite friends and relatives to
their well-furnished homes for ostentatious give-aways. They could [484]
make trips to neighbouring reserves, there to continue the display
of generosity. Best of all, they might invest in a sacred bundle as [778]
a further token of concrete achievement and as supernatural insur-
ance against the vagaries of weather and fortune. This had always
been the Blackfoot way of indicating change of status, as condi-
tioned by years of experience with a plentiful buffalo supply and
the risks of warfare that might reduce one's wealth to nothing over-
night. If any followed the agency's counsel to save, a succession of [454]
poor or indifferent crops quickly consumed the backlog, and there
was nothing to show for the effort.

These two factors, the assumption of economic and political 829
management and the failure of reserve enterprises to produce a [657]
return commensurate with Indian expectations, have produced frus-
tration of the needs for political and economic self-expression. Since [433]
the council of chiefs is an impotent body and since the last vestiges
of political control were removed with the scattering of the Black-
foot onto familial farms, a political void has been created. In good
times this arrangement produces no consequences, for there is op-
portunity for self-expression in a gratifying Blackfoot social life.
Participation, however, is reduced by lean years. There results a
system of devices which can only produce satisfaction in the rare
times of abundance.

The question arises why in their dissatisfaction the Indians 829
blame the agency. The system would run much more smoothly if
Blackfoot themselves assumed the blame for failure and, as the 657
white employees propose, work harder. It is necessary to realize
first that the agency is regarded as the seat of the chief, and chiefs

575 The owner of the tipi in which the society usually meets, who is also
561 one of the members, keeps a pipe and tobacco ready for use in the ceremonies.
[276] There is no special form of pipe, neither are there any peculiar
[554] smoking customs pertaining to this society. This individual does not buy
his place by the regular transfer nor is he recognized as having any particular
official status. Nevertheless, it is said that no matter where the
ceremony is performed, this individual is expected to provide the pipe and
care for it.

The lay members in this society are spoken of as the all-brave-dogs and
are limited to twenty individuals. Some informants, however, deny that
[424] there was any special number. Later on it will be shown that each lay
[432] member purchased a particular rattle and since the rattles were, of course,
of a definite number, the membership was limited thereby. The lay members
[292] have no costume of any kind, but carry their blankets over their left
[237] arms and their rattles in their right hands. On the back of the head each
wears a feather.

[534] An interesting point is that the face painting is determined by the painting
upon the rattle as shown in Fig. 10. The rattles vary greatly in their
[531] painting. Each individual therefore, paints his face according to the
[302] painting upon the rattle he owns. No one now living recalls any symbolic
significance for the painting on the rattles other than that it furnishes the
copy for face painting. There is no special myth accounting for their origin.
[796] When the paint rubs off or it becomes necessary to repaint the rattle, the
former owner of it must be called upon to perform this service. He will
count war deeds and perform other ceremonies after which he paints the
[787] rattle. For this he must receive liberal fees. It was said that the person
who first "dreamed the society" directed that the rattles be painted in this
way.

[887] The old men comrades are expected to give advice in the conduct of the
various ceremonies, one of whom is expected to act as a herald and to ride
[203] about the camps calling the society together whenever a meeting is desired.
[534] These men have no particular costume, but each has a rattle, and may wear
a feather at the back of his head.

[292] The single men comrades are required to perform certain services such
[237] as gathering food and receiving presents. Each has a rattle according to
which he paints and otherwise dresses according to his taste. The society
[556] usually elects the sons of prominent families, since they not only have fine
costumes, but since their relatives are apt to make liberal presents to the
society.

[796] A tipi for the society's ceremonies is set up inside the camp circle. This
[535] is usually the tipi of one of the bear-all-brave-dogs, though other members

535 lasting until daybreak. Sometimes people are invited to attend the dance,
272 and at others they simply come together of their own accord.

[533] There are special songs for the dance and drums are used. The dancers
[534] rise and dance in place, beating time on a dipper of tea while dancing.

THE NIGHT SINGERS.

533 It is an old custom among the Blackfoot for parties of young people to
883 ride about the camp at night, singing. That this is a distinct thing is evident
[492] since there is a distinct series of songs used only on such occasions. At such
times they often ride double, that is two men on a single horse, or often a
man and a woman. Mr. Duvall writes as follows:—

> [625] These young men sometimes ride around all night and sing. Formerly, it was done to guard the camp and protect the horses from being stolen by the enemy. The singers usually go around the outer edge of the camp, making many rounds. There are usually three or four groups with three or four men in each group. Sometimes women assist the night singers.
>
> The night singers do not necessarily have to belong to any society but anyone
> [834] may join them. This custom is kept up nowadays only during the sun dance. It is not understood as good form for the women or girls to go out with the night singers. Although a great many of the grass dance songs are sung, there are special songs also. The singing is usually continued until daylight. At the end of each song they usually shout and keep time with sleigh bells when singing. They are never ordered to sing at the present time.

THE BEGGING DANCE.

535 The Piegan name for this dance is "those that dance around camp for a
276 smoke." The members do not belong to a society, but a number of men,
[533] six or twelve, or sometimes more, go to some tipi and sing and shake their
[534] bells. This may be done at any time of the night. The owner of the tipi
fills a pipe and lets them smoke, gives them some food, a blanket, clothing,
[431] a horse, or money. The presents are divided up among the men. The
owner of the tipi seldom knows who the men are. They repeat this at four
tipis and then disband. Several groups of these men may go around at the
[556] same time, but they never stop at the same tipi. Usually, the men stop at
the tipi of a chief or head man as they are more sure of getting a smoke, for
it adds to one's prestige to be generous with presents, feasts, etc.

[pp 461-986 not processed]

they were the first to perform in the Medicine 575
Lodge. This was an opportunity for the societies 561
to inspire the People, as well as themselves, with 796
their ceremonies and comradeship. And it was an
honor for members to donate food to the gathered [431]
People, who were given good thoughts [556]
through the gesture.

After the presentation, the People were asked 796
to return to their lodges and spend the night
quietly. There was to be no noise, especially near [784]
the Medicine Lodge. The Weather Dancers were [791]
fasting and meditating on the Holy Powers
created by the sacred encampment. [785]

THE SELF-TORTURE CEREMONIES

Another group to participate in the Medicine 796
Lodge ceremony came to fulfill their own vows. 782
These were men who had made vows of physical
sacrifice in exchange for spiritual help from Sun. 785
Such vows were usually made during dangerous situations, perhaps on the hunt or warpath, when death seemed imminent. A vowing man might call out to Sun, "Help me, O holy Sun, my Father, and let me see you again with happiness. Give me your strength so that I may survive this danger, and I will give myself to you. I will help my People to remember your Holy Power by performing the physical torture dance during the next Holy Lodge ceremony of our People." Fulfilling such vows was truly a Sun Dance, and inspiring to those who watched.

—

WILSON'S OBSERVATIONS: 1892

The last time self-torture vows were fulfilled during 796
a Blood Medicine Lodge ceremony was in 785
1892. The days of warpaths were already past. Although 657
our young men still went on regular horse
raids then, there was seldom any fighting, even [178]
when the raiders were caught. Government agents [721]
knew that the self-torture ceremony inspired a
spirit of adventure, which they opposed. Follow- [182]
[177]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 37A]

very fearless warrior. Considering what there was to be had at that time, this Indian was fairly well off. He had a big buffalo skin teepee, two wives, a marriageable daughter, and a fair sized bunch of horses, among which were some fast buffalo runners. In the way of weapons he had a quiver of bow and arrows, and a two-edged flint dagger, which answered the purpose of a butcher knife as well. 539 173 [411]

These Indians were constantly on the lookout for their horses, as prowling enemy Indians were always around. At night they staked their mares or leaders, turning them loose in the mornings and driving them to untrodden grass, within a watching distance of the camps. The Indian's wealth was in his band of horses in those days. [556] ● [721]

One morning, just at dawn, Many Swans woke up his Queen to go with him to attend his horses. He left the other woman still sleeping. He slung his bow and arrow on his back, and put his dagger in his belt. On no occasion must these things be left behind in such chores.

Turning loose their staked horses, the two started them up towards the summit of the Butte to cleaner feed. Arriving on the top, the woman came running on tiptoes towards her husband, making the sleeping motion sign. She told him that there were a couple of people fast asleep in a buffalo wallow, just on top of the Butte. [201]

Pulling out his bow and arrow ready for action, Many Swans advanced on the sleepers. His first thought was that they must be from the home camps, perhaps lullaby singers who, having sung all night, went off some place to sleep so as to avoid the morning noise of the herald cryers. 539 173 721

It was all in an instant that the two were on their feet and were retreating from Many Swans. The Blood, recognizing them to be from the Crow tribe by the cut of their forelocks and their attire, at once knew that they were enemies from far away Big Horn River, in Montana. He let fly his arrow which struck the leader who dropped all in a heap. He drew another arrow and let it fly to the other, striking him just below the left shoul-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 60-A

continue their basic daily life. One hundred 778
horses were once given in exchange for a Medi- 432
cine Pipe. In our Old Ways, these goods were 178
considered sacrifices, material wealth exchanged
for spiritual wealth. [771]

Outside influences came to displace this idea
of exchange, trading one item for another, and
replaced it with the concept of "payment." It
wasn't long before most of our People began to
apply this payment philosophy to our Old Ways.
Some began to regard the sacrifice of exchanging [771]
material things for holy things as a form of pay-
ment. As the Old Ways eroded, and the spiritual
meaning of things like these exchanges became
lost, it gradually became fact that our People
bought their sacred Bundles by "paying" for them.
Some of our People even began to believe that
such Power could be bought and sold for pay-
ments in goods.

Today, the transfer of our Bundles is often [796]
purely a material affair: only the barest ritual is
performed to satisfy traditional requirements.
Neither the old nor the new owners make any
spiritual adjustments in their lives in order to let
the Holy Powers help them. The Bundles hang on [556] ●
walls, more as status symbols than as inherited
Holy Spirits.

Robert Wilson, the trader, was probably the 439
first to gather a collection of old things from our
People, including Medicines. During the years 177
Wilson operated his trading post at Stand Off, it 443
was not unusual for him to accept an old shield, a 778
pair of beaded moccasins, or a pipe and beaded
pipe bag in exchange for new blankets or a gun.
One man whose family was hungry and had no
more food took the sacred Pipestem from his
ancient Beaver Bundle and gave it to Wilson in
exchange for flour. He replaced the sacred Stem
in his Bundle with a broomstick.

Wilson's interest in obtaining the old things was to preserve them as well as to help out his friends on the reserve. He never pressured people to give up their old things. Instead, there were times when he gave the things back. An example

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

This Bundle has the distinction that its 778
sacred Pipe, though fully decorated, is only the
length of a normal pipestem. In the Old Days,
there were several short Pipes, but only two remain
today among all our divisions, and only this
one is considered to have been a true war Pipe,
the other having never been to war. Originally, [533]
seven songs were sung for the opening. But during
recent transfer ceremonies, only two of the
original songs were sung; the others had been forgotten
and were replaced by our usual Medicine
Pipe songs.

George First Rider said that some of the 778
Pipe's wartime Owners included Atsitsina's 173
father, Natosina; Over-Designed Tipi; Striped
Bear; and Big Wolf. From them he learned this 539
story of its origin: [115]

*A man had only two wives. He was successful,
but he didn't have many horses. He had one real
good horse for buffalo hunts. When he went on
a buffalo hunt, he killed many and gave much
meat to the People. If he was asked for something
he would give it. His name was gradually putting* [556] ●
*him into higher rank because he was very generous.
But he didn't gain anything of real value
from his raids on the warpath.*

*One time when it was raining continually and
the wood piles were all soaked, he went on a
buffalo hunt. To enjoy the adventure of the hunt
more, he didn't join hunting parties but went
alone. When he brought home his meat, he was
all soaked. He told his wives, "Don't bring the
meat inside; unload it outside and give some to
the People." Then the wives brought in the meat
they were going to keep. They brought it in to
dry. It is usual to dry the meat a little, so that* [252]
*when it is sliced it will not slip out of your hand.
Fresh meat is slippery, and would cause the
women to cut themselves with their knives. And
the meat is tasty when it is cut dried. If the meat
is sliced fresh, the flavor seeps all out.*

*Now he told his wives, "Build a fire with that
big-sized wood. I am tired from riding and drowsy*

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

In the Old Days, men danced to express their 535
spiritual and physical powers and to stimulate 771
their enthusiasm for bravery and for thoughts
about life in harmony with nature. The dancers
wore their fanciest war clothes and most spiritual
dream symbols. Often they imitated their spiritual helpers, dressing and dancing in imitation of
some bird or animal. The steps were usually slow
and all the movements emphasized symbolic
meanings. The men danced to inspire each other [575]
when they gathered with their society comrades.
They danced to arouse the courage of a departing 535
war party and they danced to celebrate the victory 727
when the party returned successfully. In victory
dances, the victors often took no part. Instead,
their relatives, often wives or mothers, put on
their war dress and bonnets and carried the trophies of the victorious battle around the dance
circle. Guns and scalps were commonly held aloft, [555]
while the bearer called out the relative's name
and praised his bravery and success.

As life in harmony with nature changed, so 535
did the dancing. Dancing became more and more 771
of a social affair, where the People gathered to
sing and visit. As modern clothing replaced tradi- 178
tional dress, the social dances also became one of [292]
the few opportunities for the People to wear the
old-time clothing. Those who could afford fancy [556]
clothes found this an opportunity to express their
wealth and material success. The young men, of [571]
course, found these social dances fine for showing
off and courting young women. Here is how Atsitsina remembers it:

The ladies will sit to one side, at a dance, and 535
the men will sit on the other side. Before a lady 571

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 229-A]
[p. 222-A]

one. We pursued the enemy and shot him in fair 983
fight at close quarters. He fell off when he was [721]
wounded. I jumped off my horse and ran to him,
killing him and scalping him. We halved the 983
scalp and that is why it is rather thin. I took the 727
pinto and we started for home. We got home
safely without the enemy taking after us. When [431]
we got home my father told me, "Son, give that
pinto to the old man who gave you his blessing. It is due to the mascot that you have been able to get that pinto." I gave him the pinto but was very sad for I wanted the pinto for myself. But my father comforted me and said, "Son, never mind. The pinto is just going to be one of many horses you will bring home," and he was right.

These were his own words.—ETHEL TAILFEATHERS.

THE DUNCAN SHADE GANG

Our Old People continued to prove their bravery 721
and skill by going on horse raids well into the 178
present century. Some went for adventure, others went for personal or material gain. But most mature men around the turn of the century did it simply for sport at least once.

For some years there was a loosely organized group of horse raiders who went mostly to the east to raid the white ranchers in the prairie country near the Cypress Hills. Sometimes they raided nearby Crees and sometimes they went across the
line and raided ranchers in the States. They often [431]
gave away their captured horses to relatives, or
sold them on the black market; they seldom kept [438]
the horses for themselves. The recognized leader of this "gang" was a man named Duncan Shade, better known as Dog-in-the-Shade. Among his regular followers were Stephen Fox and his brother, Crazy Crow, Hungry Crow, Percy Creighton, Shot-on-Both-Sides, Black Rabbit, and Charley Goodrider.

Because of their generosity, their practice of 554
an old tradition, and the fact that they never be- [556]

21: Hungry Wolf F-4,5 (ca. 1972) 1977
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

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Charlie Goodrider dressed in his finest, as he often was.

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came involved in any shooting, the Duncan Shade Gang was respected by the People of the reserve. But it happened that they were eventually traced back to the Blood Reserve when one of the gang was discovered selling a stolen horse with a recognized brand. The Mounted Police brought several of the white ranchers to the reserve to look over the horse herds; they found many horses they'd been missing. A few of the gang were actually captured by the Mounties.

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[556]
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[p. 303-B]

of the chief. As my informant, Pantherbone (1960, 621
pers. comm.) stated: 591

> If a man marries, it is his choice as to the band with [622]
> which they will live. If a man from the Black Elks married a Fish Eater and decided to move to her band, he is transferred and is then considered to be a Fish Eater. He will usually make a choice which is most advantageous to him. One woman, who married a man from another band, had a younger brother. When she moved to her husband's band, she took her brother with her. When this boy grew up and married he could, if he wished, go back to his original band with his wife, he could take her to his sister's husband's band, or he could go to his wife's band. This situation frequently occurred among the Bloods.

These movements among bands were governed largely by the economic and social position of the groups in question. If a wealthy band was noted for its war record and its preoccupation with horse raiding; if it possessed a shaman who consistently brought good luck to the band in hunting; or if the political leadership of a band placed it in a favored position, young men would be encouraged to join its ranks either upon marriage, as a relative of the bride, or even as herders.

External forces that affected the economy or 621
status of a band could also have significant effects. 177
In the 1840s, when the chief factor (i.e., man in charge of the trading post) of the American Fur Co. married the sister of Seen From Afar, the Fish Eaters' chief, his band was immediately placed in
a special status. "One reason Seen From Afar was [622]
chief," said an informant (Percy Creighton, 1954,
pers. comm.), "was that his brother-in-law, Mr. [556]
Culbertson, used to give him all kinds of gifts and [115]
made him the richest warrior among the Bloods."

Similarly, in 1883 when the Indian agent ap- 621
pointed a man named Calf Tail, a nonentity, as 622
a head chief of the tribe in order to thwart the 177
efforts of a war chief who aspired to that position, many Bloods flocked to the new band. Realizing that the leader was a government appointee, they expected to share in the favors they believed would be forthcoming. Ironically, Calf Tail died within a few weeks of his appointment, leaving the band without their expected windfall, so they were jokingly dubbed the Orphans.

The status of a band usually rested with the 621
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[p. 96-A]

place." The leadership was passed on to an apparent nonrelative, Gross Blanc, whom the trader described as "a man of unfounded ambition and ferocity." 622 175

Informants knew of a number of instances where the chief resigned to pass the title along to a younger man, usually a son or brother. Two Suns turned the leadership of the Fish Eaters over to his son, Seen From Afar, in the 1840s; Fish Child gave up his leadership of the Many Fat Horses in favor of his brother, Many Spotted Horses in the 1850s; and Blackfoot Old Woman became chief of the Black Elks while its former leader, Eagle Head, was still alive.

One of the obvious reasons why the leadership often passed down to a relative was that the majority of those who were prominent in the band were closely related. The eldest son or younger brother was privy to the daily routines and responsibilities of leadership and had the opportunity to become personally acquainted with the elite within the tribe, or the nation, thus placing him in a favored position for wielding political influence. 622 [571]

There is no tradition of violence ever erupting because of a dispute over leadership. Even during the perilous half decade from 1869 to 1874, when whiskey had unrestricted sale in Blackfoot country and intratribal conflicts were common, leadership controversy was never a factor. This can be attributed to the democratic nature of the band system; no chief had dictatorial control over his followers, even in times of war. If a Blood was dissatisfied with the leadership being provided, he could simply move to another band or, if he had his own following, create his own band. A dictatorial chief would soon discover that he had no following. 622 578 [273] [175] 622

The successful chief usually possessed a number of positive qualities. He was generous, a good provider, and was often wealthy. He had a good war record and was frequently a ceremonialist, orator, and diplomat. Not every leader was gifted with all of these attributes, but certain men were remembered because they may have excelled in one or more. Medicine Calf, leader of the Many 622 554 [556]

buffalo went out of sight." Before this time, these Indians of the Plains 175
had been buffalo hunters and horse raiders. Afterwards, and by a some- 178
what devious process, they became cattle breeders and wheat farmers. 105

Some one hundred and fifty years earlier, the introduction of the [177]
horse and the gun had also radically affected their mode of life. Mobility increased, the hunting range was extended, competition was intensified, both outside and inside the tribal group. The horse became the most sought-for and fought-for possession, and despite disease, accidents of climate and enemy raids, accumulation was possible and led, in the course of time, to marked wealth differences. Some men might have one hundred horses (Maximilian, Prince of Wied-Neuwied, gives a much larger figure) and some might have only a few or none. The dangers of decrease were mitigated by elaborate manipulation. The horse became not only the measure of wealth but the medium of exchange. Everything—trade goods, bride price, ceremonial privilege, and often personal support—were paid for in horses. Loss in capital was temporary. Pipes, bundles, society insignia, could all be resold, often at a profit, and a return for "gifts" or conspicuous distributions at give-aways was normal expectancy. In addition, a poor man who had to borrow a horse from a rich patron—not infrequently the band chief—would have to pay over one-half his kill to his benefactor.

Thus the fact that great numbers of horses could be accumulated and held for a considerable period led to certain advantage; and this advantage was in no way destroyed by manipulation. Shrewdly organized, it could build prestige and bring support.

It was particularly in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, [177]
when the fur trade was expanding and more goods came into the hands
of the Blood, that the demonstrations of wealth became insistent. It was [595]
in this period that the rich man increased the number of his wives (he [462]
might have six or seven, while the poor man could not pay for one and [858]
had to be content with surreptitious visits to a younger and "uncertain" [556]
wife of a more fortunate tribesman); and having many wives, the rich man's tipi could be large and impressive (it was women's work to clean and tan the hides, sew them together and erect the dwelling); and it was also at this time that the "favorite," the *minipoka*, the "child of plenty" received formal recognition as a means of exploiting wealth. The influence of this institution on the father-child relationship has been significant. Today, in a different setting, its role is particularly so.

But whatever the potential increase in the food supply, or the [866]
possibility and advantage of accumulation after the introduction of the horse, for the Blood in the buffalo period, life was still precarious. Ex-

a grandmother, aunt, or older sister "because a stepfather might not 855
treat him right." 155

To some degree the extended family structure, the close camp liv- [586]
ing, and the satisfactions found in agemates (the age grades were the [587]
strongest expression of solidarity in Blood society) cushioned the threat. [182]
But, however viewed, the emotional and even at times physical support
that a child could expect from his parents or any other adult was limited
indeed.

And the supernaturals were hardly more reliable—at least not 776
those to whom one might appeal for personal aid. When a young man 787
went out alone at night to some far-off place to seek a guardian spirit— 155
in almost all instances, a male being, Old Man Sun, Morning-star, Rock
Man or some animal—he did not feel that "strong" medicine would be
his if only he followed a prescribed ritual, as was the case in the
pueblos of the Southwest. Instead, the Blood youth appealed for "pity."
And the supernaturals, like his nearest of kin, were unpredictable.
True, if the quest succeeded, prestige would be enhanced, and after [555]
some years, material advantage also. But many a supplicant, even after
repeated effort, failed to get a "vision" and the power that depended
on it.

In this insecure and competitive setting, the institution of "the 858
favorite" emerged, not as an expression of fatherly love but, as the 556
Blackfoot word, *minipoka,* "child of plenty," makes explicit, first and 554
essentially as a way of demonstrating wealth—a way no different from 155
the taking of a second, third, or fourth wife, the owning of expensive
pipes or bundles, the possession of a tipi made of eighteen or twenty
skins.

There was only one accepted criterion for having a "favorite"—enough wealth to make continual validations in his name. Thus neither the number of the child nor its sex was a consideration, but while a girl could be a *minipoka,* more often it was a boy who was so honored. And the rich man had as many favorites as he could afford. Some said they wanted to treat their children alike, some that they wanted to show how rich they were.

The process began at birth. The favorite was placed on a weasel or
otter skin—the poor man's child slept in a buckskin bag. The favorite
was "initiated" to many ceremonial privileges—protective paintings,
forelocks, charms, pipes, partnerships in a society like the Horns while
he was still in his teens. Give-aways were held in his name, and any gift [431]
made to him was quickly repaid and usually with interest.

The favorite was fed first and with the choicest morsels. He was

held in his father's arms long after such attention was necessary. And 858
when he joined other children in the play camp, he was not the "hus- 556
band" of some willing little girl, as was a less protected youngster. His 554
sister remained his watchful "mother." In the main, his close com-
panions were *minipoka* like himself, an arrangement that not only 155
fostered a blatant élitism, but also protected the "privileged" from [857]
being ganged up on by less favored children.

Nor was the "child of plenty" permitted to visit around and stay out overnight as other boys did. Nor could he attend the socially convivial "tea dances" along with other young blades. But when his father went on a trip, the *minipoka* was, whenever possible, the companion of his choice. It goes without saying that the favorite wore fine clothes, rode good horses with beautiful trappings, married with ostentatious display. Moreover, as he grew to manhood, he was spared the onerous participation in the hunt and the dangers of the warpath. He trusted to his father's wealth to bring him positions of respect. And this trust was
not misplaced. Among the Blackfoot, "great deeds in social and cere- [622]
monial life would alone elevate one to the status of headman."[22]

True, the favorite was expected to be "generous" to all and sundry. More often, however, his training made him lazy and parasitical, readier to exploit the labor of others than to add to their support.

Originally a means for validating a father's wealth, the institution [593]
of the favorite child had secondary consequences—among them, the re- [866]
inforcement of sibling rivalry, the encouragement of dependency in a
society where self-reliance was a major objective, and the forging of strong affectional bonds between a father and his child, most usually between a father and his son. And it is this last that has particular importance for the way in which the father image is revealed in every-day life.

Being a favorite meant submission to certain restrictions—less freedom of movement, less participation in some of the more adventurous or romantic aspects of Blood society; and, at times, this was resented. But we have no record of any Blood who rejected the substantial at-
tentions and advantages offered by favoritism. For the *minipoka*, the [593]
father became the "giver" *par excellence*, the only reliable "giver,"
since their statuses were so inextricably linked.[23]

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[22] Clark Wissler, "The Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians," p. 23.

[23] In the reserve period, the government was actually more "reliable." But [178]
favoritism continued and with it patterns of an earlier time that still had relevance. [171]
In fact, those Blood who had no horses, and so could not make the traditional invest-
ments in ceremonial paraphernalia and society memberships, etc., but who were [657]
otherwise successful, had favorites "the American Way"—that is, they dressed their
children well and showered them with expensive gifts.

But whether one was on the giving or receiving end, the relationship 858 between a father and his *minipoka* became an exceptionally warm 556 and satisfying one. Many of the father's gestures (his special and fine 554 gifts to his favorite, his solicitude for the latter's comfort, and his eagerness 155 for his companionship) were understood as demonstrations of love; 593 and the favorite's unwillingness to be separated for any long period of time from his indulgent parent—and this even after he married—indicated the depth of his filial affection. Other fathers might be "tricksters," might abandon wife and child, but a *minipoka's* father could be relied upon to fight for the possession of his favorite son, no matter where he intended going or with whom.

To be a *minipoka* then, was highly attractive, materially and emotionally; for besides the direct benefits of wealth and position, the "child of plenty" enjoyed a continuing love and devotion in a very insecure world. Those less privileged found consolation in less rewarding [154] substitutions and subterfuges, some parent-initiated, some inspired by their own needs. Proudly they might mention an otter skin on which they had lain at birth, a weasel-tail suit given them by a loving father, a beaded bag which held their umbilical cord; or they might recall how as a child they had played with the "real" favorites, or how a father's early death had cut short their "honorings," or alone had prevented them from becoming *minipoka*. But however gratifying such memories were to the individuals who evoked them, they never brought community recognition. Only when the spending was great and continual was a child considered a "true" *minipoka* by the Blood. Only then could he be assured of position and prestige.

Equally significant was the manner in which favoritism was extended. 593 Understandably, this process was more outspoken and probably 155 went further in families which were actually supporting a "child of [578] plenty," for it was here that rivalrous feelings were particularly stimulated. But even in more ordinary families, a child thought of himself as *someone's* favorite, if not his father's, then a grandfather's or grandmother's, or aunt's, or even an own mother's, although this was rare.[24] In any case, the same comfort and support was expected from these different relatives as the "true" favorite received from his father. In some

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[24] In a situation where the father was increasingly invoked as "good," numerous [562] customs and conceptions fostered the "bad" mother image. The mother might "throw away" a newborn infant. She might abandon husband and child for reasons of lust. Her blood polluted (she was isolated at childbirth and could not approach a sick person, tend ceremonial paraphernalia, or be present "when medicine was at work" if she was menstruating). She might be "manly hearted," taking the initiative particularly in matters of sex. She was the instrument through whom sorcery power was attained. And finally she was the disciplinarian in the home.

families these relationships were taken very seriously. In all, no matter 593
how limited the material benefits, they gave an added security to chil- 155
dren whose sense of belonging was often shaken.

But such extensions did not alter the traditional basis of favoritism. 858
It was the father who, almost always established a *minipoka,* and it was 593
the father who remained the symbol of the "giver." To say, "He was 155
like a father to me," not only implied that the individual referred to
had something to offer, but that the speaker had benefited from his
generosity and love. That a "true" *minipoka* might see his father as
"giver" is quite understandable. But others who had enjoyed little, if
any, of the favorite's privileges built a similar image. Unpleasant treat- [154]
ment at the hands of a father or father substitute (frequently an older
brother-in-law) was recalled with little display of hostility or repressed
altogether.

A man whose father had "walked out on the family" would tell with 154
obvious pleasure of the latter's kindness to him during a short visit 571
years afterwards; or, a man who was "raised" by his grandmother and [593]
shunted about from place to place, would say of the various heads of the
households he had stayed in, "They all treated me like a son," although
none of them, not even those who had "special power," conspicuously
demonstrated their affection for him; or a man who had donned
women's clothes and attempted suicide because his *minipoka* brother-in-
law was the accepted family head, would speak most enthusiastically of
the latter's "goodness" to him.

Thus it is clear that as more wealth accumulated—and this holds 556 ●
for the nonnative as well as for the native forms—a son's status, privi- 554
lege and prestige was tied more and more to his father's; and more and [178
more, a son felt impelled to insist that his father was outstandingly 593]
good and generous. For the *minipoka* the gap between fact and pro-
fession may not have been too great. For those who wanted to keep up
with the Joneses—the less privileged and the little-privileged, and these
were the overwhelming majority—it must have been wide indeed. Under 538
these circumstances, the trickster tales undoubtedly fulfilled an im- 773
portant function: in a society where the institutions encouraged an [182
idealization of the father, they offered a vigorous and uncensored re- 154
lease for the son's repressed feelings of aggression. 578]

So interpreted, the differently weighted father images evoked in [121]
Blood mythology and in daily living generally become understandable.
Equally understandable is the increased popularity of the trickster tales.

764 his tipi shortly before his death in 1931. The
172 radiating lines were set in place by Francis
Eagle Child following his father's death.

The most interesting "medicine wheel," from all aspects, is the memorial to Steel, a great Blood warrior. It is of the most classic design and the fact that it was constructed in 1940, probably makes it the most recent and last such stone marker.

Born in about 1850, Steel was an outstanding fighter against the Crow and Assiniboin and, although he never gained
official chieftain status, he was held in this
[555] regard by his people. For his exploits, he
[354] became the owner of a 30-buffalo tipi and
was permitted to have two fireplaces. Because these two points are reflected in his "medicine wheel" they should be briefly explained.

342 The average Blackfoot tipi contained 12
555 to 14 skins (Ewers, 1955, p. 131), but warriors who performed certain brave deeds were permitted to have tipis made of 30 buffalo skins. Because of its size and weight, such a lodge was said by informants to have been divided in half for moving, and was
● [556] carried on two travois. Therefore, besides
fulfilling the warrior requirements, the owner of such a tipi had to be fairly wealthy in horses. Some Bloods who owned these tipis were Seen From Afar, brothers Hind Bull and Fish Child, Packs His Tail, and Holy Sleeps. Naturally, a 30 buffalo tipi was far larger at the base than the average tipis, and this size is immediately evident when inspecting certain tipi rings or "medicine wheels."

555 If a Blackfoot owner of a 30 buffalo tipi
354 carried his bravery and heroism to an even
greater degree, he might become one of the select few to possess twin fireplaces. To gain this envied prize, a warrior had to perform some outstanding *coup* of a double nature. For example, an early Blood chief, Big White Child, knocked two enemy from the same horse--one from each side. Steel, according to an informant, gained twin fireplaces when he killed two Crow Indians in a singularly brave action.

[778] The fireplace nearest the doorway was
apparently used for everyday purposes, while the one to the west was reserved for

trates the typical woman's decorated dress 531
of the last hundred years. The decoration 294
is in dark blue and white "real beads," ap- [78]
plied in bands at the top of the dress over each shoulder, to a wider, meandering banded area over the breast, and a narrow band at the lower edge. The breast band is always applied in vertical strings of beads of a single color. The area is divided into long, parallel, meandering bands of two or more colors, one placed above another to form the design. In the late '90's and early years of the present century, "basket beads" generally were employed in this decoration. Decorative patches of red and black flannel were added to the lower portions of woman's dresses, as shown on
the Audubon specimen. In the old days [556]
wealthy men's wives were wont to decorate [237]
their dresses with four rows of elk teeth instead of, or in addition to, the beadwork.
In more recent years silk dresses have been [178]
decorated after the fashion of the traditional ones of skin.

Decoration of Women's Leggings

Women's leggings were formerly of skin, more recently of flannel (usually red or

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and decoration. It is said that the fastest 531
Piegan beadwork, in the late years of the 294
use of "real beads," required nearly three weeks to complete a man's shirt, leggings and moccasins. In the more recent seed bead period women have been known to work months on a suit. Such a suit was [292]
worn only in ceremonials or on other special [764]
occasions, and was carefully preserved so that the owner might be buried in it.

Decoration of Robes and Blankets

Some buffalo robes, worn by wealthy men 531
or women on dress occasions, were decorated 237
with porcupine quills in narrow, parallel bands running the long dimension of the 294
hide, about a foot apart. There was generally 556
a block of red quills in the center of each line flanked by sections of quillwork in other colors. A robe of this kind also had a triangle of quillwork about eight inches high, pointing inward from each of the hind leg areas of the hide. This robe known simply as "quilled robe." It was [435]
valued at more than two horses.

Bands of quillwork or beadwork formerly 531
were placed along the centers of buffalo 237
robes or blankets. These bands generally were divided at intervals in their length by rosettes. (See Page 64)

Decoration of Containers

Many soft skin containers made in the 531
last 75 years by the Blackfeet have been decorated with beadwork. It is not known 415
to what extent quillwork was formerly used on these articles. In the decoration of small containers such as awl cases and paint pouches the beaded designs are composed generally of stripes, elaborated by transverse bars. The typical Blackfeet pipe and tobacco pouch was formerly decorated with geometric designs. Those made in late buffalo days generally employed mountain designs and stripes in the pattern of the nearly square beaded area immediately above the fringe. Later flowered patterns were extensively employed on these soft skin pouches.

[P.48-B)

354 doorway. It was never exactly in the middle of the east-west line, and in the one exception was closer to the west side than the east. This exception was Lodge 29, which, although erected by the Blackfoot with their four-pole construction, was occupied by visitors from the Umatilla Reservation, Oreg., who built their hearth apparently according to their own tradition: five unusually large rocks (0.6 to 1.1 feet in diameter) placed in a semicircle with the opening to the east, and the whole, as before noted, closest to the west side of the lodge. In this, as in the hearths of the other two Umatilla lodges, charred logs suggested that the visitors were not as thrifty of wood as their Blackfoot hosts, at whose fireplaces only small scraps of tinder could be discovered.

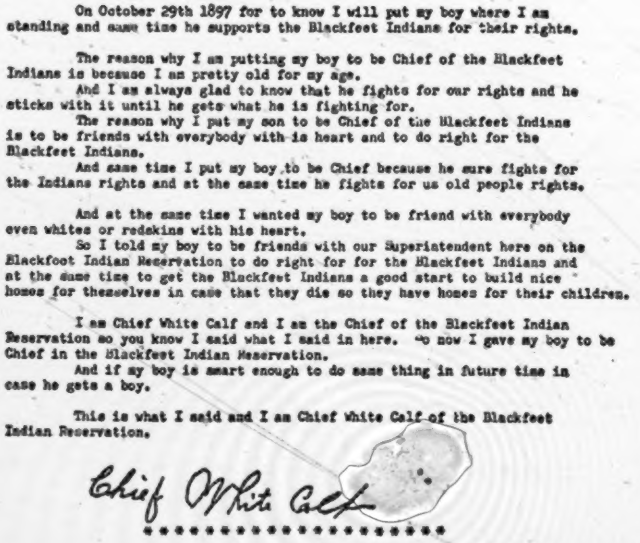
172 A peculiarity of the camp ground after the removal of the lodges was the evidence of their former location: rings of tall grass. Although the grass was much trampled for a couple of feet around both the interior and the exterior of the tipis, at the peg line itself it remained noticeably unbroken, except for the area of the doorway, in which it was badly worn down (pl. 60, *b*).

The tipi sites were carefully searched for both perishable and imperishable remains. Of the former, wood, papers, cloth, wooden tent pegs and skewers, eggshells, orange and lemon skins, a partially burnt, child's beaded moccasin and a woman's slipper were discovered; of the latter the campsite produced hearths (burnt earth, charcoal, charred wood, ash and fire-cracked or reddened rocks), burnt as well as unburnt bone fragments, pieces of glass and metal (principally food containers), corn kernels, fruit stones, a seed (probably sunflower), and a bead.

121 Examination of the 1956 Blackfoot encampment in conjunction with
investigation of archeological tipi ring sites on the Blackfeet Reserva-
tion leads to the inevitable conclusion that the phenomena are truly
homologous (pl. 59, *a*, *b*), resulting from the identical cause, the use
of rocks as weights in anchoring tipis. The minor differences between [177]
the modern and the older sites are attributable to the innovations
introduced into Indian life by today's civilization (e. g., stoves, metal [556]
tools, and food containers), or to the "ceremonial" aspects of the [769]
modern camp, in which several of the tipis were erected in memory
of former, now deceased owners, or as showplaces, but not actually
lived in, while none were intended to be more than temporary shelter
during a 4-day holiday. Thus, study of the modern camp not only [178]
presents and indicates the trend for (refer to Mrs. Spanish's statement)
an interesting survival of the tradition of using rocks as weights for
tipis, now restricted to anchoring the inner lining; but it also illumi-
nates the archeological tipi-ring sites, corroborating the testimonies

Chief that I had read somewhere that Indian horses were trained 231
to be mounted from the right side, instead of the left side as is the case with White-trained horses. The Chief laughed and said that in his day an Indian didn't have time to go running around from one side of a horse to another and a horse that couldn't be mounted from any side–including from the rear–could damn well cost you your life.

In discussing the ownership of horses as a measure of wealth, the 231
Chief mentioned that his brother Wolf Tail, who had been very 556
wealthy and had even owned a partnership in a bank later in his life, had at one time possessed nearly a thousand horses. This
revelation answered a question which had been puzzling me. Since 622
Wolf Tail was old Onistáipokah's eldest son, he would in natural course have inherited chieftainship of the Piegans when his father died. But the old Chief had been so anxious that not Wolf Tail but my dad succeed him as head chief that he had an official document prepared, in the custom of the White Man, specifically stating his wishes in this matter. The document, which was officially filed with the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, was drawn up in 1897,



On October 29th 1897 for to know I will put my boy where I am standing and same time he supports the Blackfeet Indians for their rights.

The reason why I am putting my boy to be Chief of the Blackfeet Indians is because I am pretty old for my age.
And I am always glad to know that he fights for our rights and he sticks with it until he gets what he is fighting for.
The reason why I put my son to be Chief of the Blackfeet Indians is to be friends with everybody with is heart and to do right for the Blackfeet Indians.
And same time I put my boy to be Chief because he sure fights for the Indians rights and at the same time he fights for us old people rights.

And at the same time I wanted my boy to be friend with everybody even whites or redskins with his heart.
So I told my boy to be friends with our Superintendent here on the Blackfoot Indian Reservation to do right for for the Blackfeet Indians and at the same time to get the Blackfeet Indians a good start to build nice homes for themselves in case that they die so they have homes for their children.

I am Chief White Calf and I am the Chief of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation so you know I said what I said in here. So now I gave my boy to be Chief in the Blackfeet Indian Reservation.
And if my boy is smart enough to do same thing in future time in case he gets a boy.

This is what I said and I am Chief White Calf of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation.

Chief White Calf

* *

to steal horses from the enemy was the primary key to social and 622
political advancement among all the Plains Tribes. It is also of 484
importance to know that not only was a chief expected to be able 231
to obtain horses and guns from the enemy, he was expected to be [721]
very generous in loaning or giving these articles to those who [555]
lacked them. Especially the head or civil chiefs were often quite [426]
poor simply because they had given so much of their material accumulation 622
to other persons. This great burden of obligation which 426
the civil chief bore in the name of his people was one reason that [624]
some war chiefs actually refused to accept the position of civil chief:
they were too stingy, and of course when this fact became known [157]
the tribe would not have retained them as civil chiefs anyway. Generosity [157]
is still highly regarded among the Blackfoots, and even today
the stingy Indian is regarded with contempt. Obviously then, since 622
the Chief's older brother Wolf Tail retained in his personal possession [556]
the fantastic number of one thousand horses, the man was not
overly burdened with charitable tendencies. And that is why old
Onistáipokah made sure that my Indian dad, who is generous to a
fault, became civil chief in his stead. Little could the old Chief have [657]
known that in 1935 the Wheeler-Howard Act would deprive his [643]
generous and capable son of any real authority and place tribal control
instead in the hands of a tribal council.

The fact that the Blackfoots and Plains Tribes in general were [171]
directed in the more important aspects of life by the authority of a
civil chief, does not in any way imply a sequacious leaning on the
part of Indians. The civil chief controlled the destiny of his people
only so long as the strength of his personality and the obvious correctness
of his judgments served to vindicate his authority. The 181
American Indian was and is an individualist in the most trying 171
connotation of the word; no single person ever held total sway over
any Plains Tribe. Every Indian battle ever fought was conducted [725]
not as a single concerted effort under the master guidance of a
single commander or strategist-in-chief, but as the coincidentally combined efforts of numerous small groups or individuals, each fighting as he damn well pleased. This is true even of such supposedly masterminded military operations as Chief Joseph's withdrawal to the Canadian line and, especially, the Battle of the Little Big Horn. It is, from the point of view of the Indian at least, a damn shame that the Plains Indians couldn't have stuck together. Even today, one of the main problems of the American Indians is that they cannot stick together and function politically as a single force. The Plains Indian constituted the best light cavalryman the world has

175 105 buffalo herds went to the Blackfoot because the other contestants: the Kutenai, Flathead, Pend d'Oreille, and Snake had insufficient firearms. As a result of these successes the Blackfoot moved in a southwesterly direction, eventually extending their territory throughout southern Alberta; from the Cypress Hills in Saskatchewan to the Rockies, and from the North Saskatchewan River to the Mussel-shell River in Montana. At the height of their power they were capable of disrupting the fur trade in Montana while continuing to harass the Hudson's Bay Company in its attempts to solidify trade relations with the western Indians mentioned above.

From 1800 on, explorers, fur traders, and missionaries began to frequent the area and describe for us the Blackfoot version of what has come to be called the True Plains culture.[15] [177] The base line for this culture was the Blackfoot exploitation of the fur trade and fur trader for guns, liquor and luxury goods.[16] [595] Despite frequent outbreaks of disease, [556] competition for social status increased as did wealth and status differentials and the concommitant polygyny.[17] At the same time some of the traditional controls in raiding, warfare, and civil administration appeared to break down. The increased supply of guns and horses seemed to lead to increased individualism, and this individualism brought about an even more aggressive exploitation of their major resource, the buffalo.[18] One might see the first half of the nineteenth

181 178 461 day in the valuation of ambivalence toward Bronc Riding. It would seem that it merely makes the direct rewards for success a little more dear, and indicates how strong the personal success strivings must have been and are today.

181 175 Further evidence for the existence of the desire to succeed in early Blood life is found in the uncomfortable position of Alexander Henry, the Hudson's Bay trader. Insolence, theft, and tireless begging would not seem to be characteristic of a proud or haughty people. However, if one grants that Henry was an outsider, if one grants that success in the past had to be viable in practical Blood terms as it is today, then it must be admitted that such character traits are not anomalous after all. In Henry's narrative it is mentioned that inter-tribal warfare was important, that there was a violent incident involving competition for women, and that the considerable independence of action among the Indian people made it tedious to trade with these peoples.[A] Considering these aspects of Indian culture it is not surprising to find the individual Indian plaguing the trader, stealing from him, and pillaging the trader's friends and neighbors. The goal of the Indian of this era would seem to be the accumulation of capital goods which could be used in social exchanges and in other ways to enhance the prestige of the individual Indian among his own people. ● 556 175 181 178

A, [See Category 175, pp. 151-154--Analyst]

181 175 This parallels the success strivings of the young Blood
●556 today in its Indian orientation.

178 Finally, past views of success can be seen in
175 Schultz' social position and his wife's practical attitude
181 toward it.[A] She saw no benefit in his entering into the horse raiding complex because she also saw that he had wealth and economic security. She noted that he had a position of some consequence among her people and she felt there was no reason for him to undertake such dangerous activities. Also, she seemed to think that there was little point in his seeking the spoils of horse raiding and, indeed, such a desire would be shameful. From Nat-ah'-ki's cross-cultural perspective there was no good reason for a white man of obvious wealth to enter into the Indian pursuit of status and recognition through horse theft.

On the other hand, she was susceptible to Schultz' arguments when their camp was about to be attacked. This again indicates the scope of success striving and community. It indicates the one condition whereby the individual white man becomes involved in the status and role expectation system of the Indian. Other aspects of Indian-white man contrast appear in Schultz' narrations concerning his wife's relation to him on the winter hunt; she did not wish to be housed-up like a white woman, and in Schultz' relation to his mother-in-law.

A, [See Category 175, pp. 160-162--Analyst]